



A GENERAL M Cowper

HISTORY

From the NATIVITY of our

BLESSED SAVIOUR

To the First ESTABLISHMENT of

Christianity by Human Laws,

Under the EMPEROR

CONSTANTINE the Great.

Containing the Space of about 313 Years.

With fo much of the Jewish and Roman HISTORY as is Necessary and Convenient to illustrate the WORK.

To which is added, A Large CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE of all the Roman and Ecclesiastical Affairs, included in the same Period of Time.

By LAURENCE ECHARD, A. M. Prebendary of Lincoln, and Chaplain to the Right Reverend William, Lord Bishop of that Diocese.

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CHAP. VIII.

From the total Destruction of Jerusalem, to the Beginning of the second General Persecution of the Church, under the Emperor Domitian.

Containing the Space of near 25 Years.

HE Jews were now an accurfed aban- A. D. don'd People, without Scepter, without Sacrifice, without Altar, without Ephod; yet still they retain'd their Circumcifion, their Sabbath, their Paschal Lamb, and some other Ceremonies, as a Mark that God had left upon them,

as he once did upon Cain, that they might not be wholly exterminated. And thus they were distinguish'd, and likewise dispers'd through all Nations, that the whole World might be Witnesses of their Punishment and Obslinacy; and that they might be as Esan, Servants to the true Israel the Christians, in bearing and transmitting the Holy Scriptures; not for their own Advantage, but for a Testimony of the Truth, against the Pagans and Themselves. And Man. 24. now the Christians began to lift up their Heads with Con- 31-34. fidence, after their severe Persecutions, being assur'd of an Mark 13. approaching Summer, and a certain Redemption; and know-Late 21. ing that the Kingdom of God was even at their Doors. 28-32. For God had now fent his Ministers with the Trumpet of his Gospel, to gather together his Chosen People in the utmost Parts of the World; all which, as our Saviour told his Disciples, shou'd be accomplish'd before one Generation pass'd away. So that Christianity now flourish'd, and VOL. II.

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increas'd more than ever; and Churches were establish'd, and Bishops were plac'd in all great Cities in the Roman Empire. In Antioch, Evodius the Bishop of that City dying, he was this Year succeeded by the famous Ignatius call'd Theophorus, a Disciple of St. John's ; yet first ordain'd into this Church by St. Paul, as Evodin was by St. Peter, according to the Author of the Apostolick Constitutions: Which is no ways contrary to Probability, fince many have observ'd, that where St. Peter and St. Paul preach'd, and founded a Church in the same City; one being an Apostle of the Circumcifion, and the other of the Uncircumcifion, the Church was divided into two Catus, or Assemblies, under their respective Bishops. In this City both the Apostles laying the Foundation, each committed the Superstructure to a distinct Successor, Evodius succeeding St. Peter, and Ignatius St Paul; till Evodius dying, about the time of the Destruction of Jerusalem, when the Distinction between the Jewish and Gentile Converts began to fail, there was a Coalition of both the Catus under the surviving Bishop Ignatius. So Dionysius of Corinth seems to imply, was his Church founded; and so without doubt was the Church of Rome, where Linus, and after him Clerus or Anactetus fucceeded St. Paul, and Clement St. Peter, till at length both the Catus had their Union under Clement; which naturally folves all the Difficulties of the first Succession in many Churches. Titus having finish'd his great Work, and winter'd at

A. D. Cafarea, went to Berytus and Antioch, and from thence turn'd back to Alexandria, in order to go for Rome. In 71 ... this Journey, he pass'd by the Ruins of Jerusalem, upon Veip. the Sight of which, he cou'd not but deplore the Loss of 2

that noble City; curfing the Seditious, and lamenting that his Virtue shou'd be made known by the Calamity of that miserable People. At Rome all Mens Mouths were fill'de with the Praises of Titus, who had shewn himself so expert a Soldier and Commander; and a Triumph was decreed by the Senate, both for him and his Father, who had fo bravely manag'd the Beginning of the Jewish War. Titus being return'd to Rome, was receiv'd with the universal Applauses of the whole City, and about the end of the Month April, both the Father and the Son enter'd upon their Triumphs, which was as folemn and magnificent as

Rome ever faw. For the Spectacles there exhibited both for Number, Variety and Charge, were admirable in all things which Human Invention cou'd possibly supply; and all Things that ever were esteem'd valuable, or beautiful

among Persons abounding in Wealth and Prosperity, were

Chap. VIII. VESPASIAN the 10th Rom. Emp. 389

that Day expos'd in the Triumph; largely displaying the wonderful Power, and Magnificence of the Romans. Among the rich and glorious Spoils, were expos'd incredible Quantities of Gold taken out of the Temple; after which was carry'd the Body of the Jewish Law, the last, and not the least remarkable of all the Spoils. In this Triumph Simon was ignominiously dragg'd along with a Rope about his Neck, and afterwards flain. Titus had a Triumphal-Arch erected to his Honour, of extraordinary Beauty and Workmanship, describing all his noble Exploits against the Jews, which to this Day continues almost intire, as a lasting Monument against that impious and perverse Nation. Vespasian likewise began a new Temple to Peace, to contain the Jewish Spoils; and now having quieted all Nations, as well as the Jews, he shut up the Temple of Fanus, in token of an universal Peace, it having stood open about five Years. And thus after the most dreadful Storm that ever hapned, and the most fignal Vengeance, which was attended with Wars in every Nation, and an universal Concussion of Nature, there succeeded a great

Calm throughout all the Parts of the World.

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After this happy Peace, Vespasian proceeded to the Re- Suet. gulation of the numerous Abuses and Corruptions in the State, begun in the late Reigns and the Civil Confusions; and what he undertook, he perform'd with great Wisdom and Resolution. He first restrain'd the Luxury and Licentiousness of his Officers and Soldiers, not sparing those who had been Affistants to him and Partners with him in his Victories, not omitting any Thing that might restore the ancient Discipline. He took no less care in purging and reforming the two principal Orders among the Romans, the Senators and Equites, of both which he took a strict and particular View; and fearlefly turn'd out all fuch as he found unworthy of their Places and Dignities, Supplying their Places with the most deserving Persons he could procure either in Italy, or the distant Provinces. He likewise strictly examin'd into all the Courts of Judicature, where he found the Number of Processes, and Law-Suits swell'd to fuch an unreasonable Bulk, that innumerable Actions were left undetermined; for the finishing of which, he qualify'd many knowing Persons, and made many excellent Laws to digest and reduce such Matters into a far less compass. To reform the Corruptions of Usurers, and the Loofness of Youth, he ordain'd, That no Usurer should recover any Mony of young Heirs, if it was lent to be repaid with Advantage upon the Decease of their Fathers, And

And as he was severe in punishing Vice and Lewdness, so he was no less remarkable for rewarding all Kinds of Merits; in which he extended his Liberality to Men of all Ranks, compleating the Estates, and settling Pensions upon many decay'd Persons, when their Wants proceeded from no manifest Crime of theirs. His Courtesse and Clemency appear'd constantly both in publick and private, so that fearce one innocent Person was punish'd throughout his Reign; and so contrary was his Temper to that of most of his Predecessors, that he cou'd not so much as look upon the Sufferings of a Criminal, without fignifying his Compassion by his Sighs and Tears. But tho' he was thus mild and humble, brave and generous, yet he did not preserve himself from the Scandal of Avarice and Rapaciousness, which was grounded upon his numerous and peculiar Impositions, particularly his Excise upon Urin; at which when his Son Titus was offended, he took some of the first Mony that came from thence, and demanded if the Smell offended him? And

yet, proceeded he, this comes all out of the Urin. In this Year he order'd Liberius Maximus and Bassus to fell all the Lands in Judea, and appropriated all to himself, leaving there only 800 Soldiers, and giving them a Place to inhabit call'd Emmaus, five or fix Miles from Jerusalem. He also impos'd a Tribute upon all the Jews in the Roman Empire, commanding every Person yearly to pay two Drachma's to

the Capitol, as they had formerly done to the Temple at Ferusalem. And thus the miserable Jews, who rejected the

Messiah, and wou'd own no King but Casar, now were

constrain'd to acknowledge the Idol of Jupiter for their

Eufeb. Epiph. Ferom.

Jeseph.

At this time, the Church of God, tho' flourishing and free from Persecution, was much disturb'd and infested with feveral Herefies, proceeding in a great measure from a Mixture of Samaritanism, Judaism and Christianity. For befides the immediate Followers of Simon Magus and the Gnosticks, those of Menander, Ebion and Cerinthus, began to shew themselves, to the great Danger of the Christian Faith. To give some Account of each, 1. Menander was a Samaritan, and like Simon a notorious Impostor and Magician, abounding with more monstrous Illusions than he; declaring himself a Saviour, sent from above for the Restauration of Mankind, and teaching, that no Man cou'd otherwise overcome the Angels, the Makers of the World, upless he was first instituted in the Magical Knowledge deliver'd by him, and initiated in his Baptism: Of which Baptism, those who were accounted worthy, he affirm'd shou'd

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be Partakers of a perpetual Immortality in this very Life, and continue always young and vigorous in this World. With these and other of his Master Simon's Opinions he seduc'd many in Antioch; and tho' the Extravagancy of his Notions made them less infectious, yet they were continu'd in the second Century, particularly by Basilides and Saturninus. 2. Ebion, so call'd from his affected Poverty, and born in Cocaba a Village in Palestine, spread his Heresie in Trachonitis, and among the Christians who had retired to Pella, where he gain'd many Followers. These deny'd the Divinity of our Saviour, acknowledg'd him an excellent Person, but believ'd that he was born of Joseph and Mary. They enjoyn'd the Observation of the Law of Moses, as neceffary to Salvation, retain'd Circumcifion, the Sabbath, and other Ceremonies; but to shew themselves Christians, they kept the first Day of the Week, in Commemoration of the Resurrection of Jesus. They receiv'd all the Writings of the Old Testament; but for the New Testament, they rejected all but St. Matthew's Gospel, or rather the Gospel according to the Hebrews or Nazarens; and particularly condemn'd St. Paul as an Apostate, for proving the Dissolution of the Mosaick Law. 3. Cerinthus spread his Heresie principally in Ephesus, and Asia Minor, which in fome Things was the same with that of Ebion; particularly in the Denial of the Divinity of our Saviour, in the acknowledgment only of St. Matthew's Gospel, and in affirming the Obligation of the Mosaick Rites. He afferted the Creation of the World by Angels, as did the Gnosticks; and to infinuate himfelf among the Vulgar, he boafted of strange Revelations and Illuminations. He also taught that as Jesis was but a meer Man, Christ descended upon him in the Likeness of a Dove, and that then Jesus Christ revealed the Father, who before was unknown; and that at last Christ, who was incapable of Suffering, forfook Jesus, and left him to fuffer Death. And lastly, that his Kingdom afterwards shou'd be Terrestrial, in the City of Jerusalem, where Men shou'd be bless'd with all Kinds of carnal Pleafures for a thousand Years.

About the latter End of this Year 71, or the Beginning of the next, according to Mr. Dodwell, the Apostle Jude wrote his short Epistle, which is plac'd the last of those seven in the sacred Canon, which are call'd Catholick. It has no particular Inscription as the other six have, but it was probably intended for the Jewish Converts, in their several Dispersions, as St. Peter's Epistles were. In it he first shew'd his Design to write to them in general of the A 4

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common Salvation, and to confirm them in it; but feeing the Doctrine of Christ attack'd on every Side by Hereticks, he thought it more necessary to exhort them to stand manfully upon the Defence of the Faith once deliver'd to the Saints, and to oppose those false Teachers who so much labour'd to corrupt it. The Hereticks meant in this Epifile were some of the Gnofticks, but especially the Ebonites, whose Manners were as corrupt as their Doctrine, also imagining Faith without Works sufficient for Salvation. So that his Subject is much the same with St. Peter's fecond Epistle, whose Sense he mostly follows, and often uses the very same Expression; but because the Infe-' ction had spread it self farther, and gotten more Ground, he oppos'd these Hereticks with more Zeal, and Sharpness ' than St. Peter. Yet with a Spirit of Charity he exhorted the Christians to labour by all gentle Methods to fave them, and to take them out of the Fire, into which their own Folly had cast them. Several Persons have anciently doubted of the Authority of this Epistle, because it quotes. the Apocryphal Book of Enoch, and also brings the History of the Archangel St. Michael disputing with the Devil concerning the Body of Moses, taken out of another Apocryphal Book, intituled, The Ascension of Moses. But this does not diminish the Reputation of this Epistle, nor add much to the Credit of those Apocryphal Books; fince they might contain some Truths, as well as many Errors, which St. Jude, inspir'd by God, knew well how to distinguish. Enfebrus tells us, that in his Time most Churches made Use of this Epistle; and it is evident that before the End of the 4th Century, it was universally acknowledg'd for Canonical Scripture, in the Council of Laodicea and Carthage, and by the most eminent Fathers. And Origen says of it, That in a few Lines it contains many Words full of divine Power and Grace.

A. D. 72. Vefp.

3. 4. Joseph.

Tho' Titus had conquer'd Palestine and the Jews by the taking of Ferusalem, yet for a long Time after, two or three strong Castles held out; the last of which was the impregnable Fortress Massada, which was kept by Eleazar, Grandson of Judas Galilaus; who finding that he cou'd fubfift no longer, perfuaded the Befieged, to the Number of 960, to kill themselves with their Wives and Children, having first burnt the Castle and all that was valuable in it. This was done upon the 15th Day of April, and compleatly finish'd all Wars and Rebellions in Judea, which began about fix Years before. But many of the Robbers and Affaffinates

sassinates that escap'd from this Country, fled into Egypt, where perfuading the Jews in those Parts to revolt, great Disturbances were rais'd, which ended with the Death and Ruin of these Incendiaries. And this so far provok'd the Emperor, that he order'd Lupus the Governor to demolish the Jews Temple near Memphis, which Onias had built above 300 Years before. Which Order was not executed in the Rigour; but the Temple was rifled of all its Gifts and Riches, thut up, and all Persons forbidden to come at it, so that there was not the least Footstep of Religion left there. About the same Time a certain Jew nam'd Jonathan, a Weaver, escaping to Cyrene, rais'd a Tumult there; and persuading the Vulgar that he wou'd shew them Signs and Wonders, he foon led 2000 into the Defarts. But Catullus the Governor of Lybia, by a Party of Horse and Foot, in a short Time defeated them, and took Jonathan Prisoner; who falfly accusing the most wealthy of his Countrymen, as Authors of this Rebellion, Catullus without any farther Enquiry, put 3000 Jews to Death at once. Besides these Miseries and Calamities, with which Josephus concludes his famous History, Eusebius tells us, that Vespasian commanded all those that were of the Family of David to be diligently fought out, lest any one of the Royal Race shou'd be lest remaining among the Jews; and that upon this, a most severe Perfecution was again brought upon the Tews.

All Things being quieted and fetled in Judaa, it is believed that the Christians at Pella at this Time return'd to Fernsalem, and the neighbouring Parts, with their Bishop Simeon; where they built some few Houses, and a little Oratory upon Mount Sion, in the Place of that Upper Room, where the Apostles assembled after our Lord's Ascension. About the same Time it is most probable that the Apostle Barnabas wrote his Epistle to the Jewish Converts; an Epiffle of great Repute among the Ancients, and sometimes read in the Christian Churches, but never admitted into the Canon of the holy Scripture. According to the Jewish Way of Writing, the Frame and Contexture of it is intricate and obscure to us, made up of uncooth Allegories, with some forc'd and improbable Interpretations of Scripture. 'Its main Defign is to prove, That the Law was abolish'd by the Gospel, that the legal Ceremonies were then useless and unprofitable, and that it was necessary that Jesus Christ shou'd be incarnate and suffer Death. It has indeed no Inscription, but the Matter of it evidently hews, That it was written to the Jews, many of whom 'after

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after they were become Christians were still fond of the Law, and observ'd its Ceremonies as necessary to Salvation. Origen, for this Reason, calls it a Catholick Epistle. because it was not intended for a single Church or People, but an whole Nation. In the last Part of it, he gave excellent Rules for Manners, defiring the Prayers of them to whom he writ, calling them the Children of Love and Peace. The Agreement in the Subject between this Epistle and St. Paul's to the Hebrews, has made Tertullian and fome others, to attribute this last to Barnabas, not having feen perhaps the Epillle it felf that bears his Name. How long Barnabas liv'd after this, we have no Certainty; it is generally faid that he dy'd a Martyr in his own Country Cyprus, being ston'd by the Jews at Salamis, and bury'd within a Quarter of a Mile of the City. Both the Greek and Latin Church keep his Feast on June 11. Some have attributed to him a Gospel full of Fables, which is con-

demn'd by Pope Gelasius. In this Year 72, several Writers place the Death of the Apostle Jude, who having propagated the Gospel in Syria and Mejopetamia, generally working as an Husbandman, at length travell'd into Persia; where after great Success in his Apostolical Ministry, he was at last for his free and open reproving the superstitious Rites and Usages of the Magi cruelly put to Death. Some fay he was shot to Death with Arrows, and others that he dy'd in Peace at Berytus in Phanicia. The ancient Martyrologies place his Feast with St. Simon's, on the 29th Day of June, and the 28th of October, and some have attributed to him a false Gospel condemn'd by Pope Gelasius. After all, the Time and Manner of St. Jude's Death is very uncertain. Nor have we greater Certainty of the Death of the Apostle Bartholomew, which is by some plac'd in the same Year. This Apostle after he had preach'd with great Success in the hither India, or Arabia Falix, into which he carry'd St. Matthew's Gofpel, is faid to have remov'd into Lycaonia, and last of all to Albanople in the greater Armenia or rather Albania, a City upon the Caspian Sea, and miserably over-grown with Idolatry: From which, while he fought to reclaim the People, he was by the Governor of the Place commanded to be crucify'd, which Punishment he chearfully underwent, comforting and confirming the Gentile Converts to the last Minute of his Life. Some add, that he was crucify'd with his Head downwards, others that he was flead, and his Skin first taken off, a barbarous Punishment much in Use in these Eastern Countries. His Feast, according to the ancient Martyrologies, is to be kept on the 24th Day of August, but the Greeks observe it on the 11th of June. The Hereticks afterwards forg'd a fabulous Gospel under his Name, as well as St. Jude's, which has been sufficiently exploded.

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The following Year is faid to be fignaliz'd with the Death A. D. of the Apostle Thomas; but with as much Uncertainty as any of the former. To this Apostle, according to the Tra- Vesp. dition of the Church in Origen's Days, was allotted Parthia, which then contain'd all Persia; and some have given us a Catalogue of the several People in that Kingdom, to whom Thomas preach'd, namely the Medes, Persians, Carmanians, Hyrcanians, and Bactrians, belides the Magi, to whom Pliny allots a distinct Region of Persia, and who liv'd in several other Places of the East. St. Chrysoftom fays, That St. Thomas, who at first was the most weak, and most incredulous of all the Apostles, became, through the Condescension of Jesus Christ to satisfie his Scruples; the most fervent, powerful and invincible of them all, and went through almost all Parts of the World, and liv'd without Fear, in the midst of the most barbarous Nations, performing his Duty without any Regard to his own Security or Life. And being encourag'd by a divine Vision, he travell'd forwards into the Indies, to Maliapur, and the Country of the Brachmans; where after many Travels and Labours, he by his Miracles converted Sagamo the Prince of the Country, with many others. This much exasperated the Brachmans, who fearing the Downfal of their Rites and Religion, refolv'd upon his Death; and accordingly at a Tomb not far from the City, where the Apostle often retir'd for his Devotions, while he was intent at Prayer, they first loaded him with Stones and Darts, 'till one of them coming nearer, ran him through with a Lance. His Feast, according to the Martyrologies, is to be observ'd on the 21st Day of December. Several Books have been attributed to him, namely, his Acts compos'd by Lucius Carinus, his Voyages, his Gospel compos'd by the Manichees, and Revelation, all condemn'd by Gelasius. From these first Plantations of Christianity in the Eastern Indies by this Apostle, there is faid to have been a continu'd Series and Succession of Christians in those Parts to this Day, and still call'd by the Name of St. Thomas-Christians.

But to return from thence to Rome, in the same Year 73, a Nobleman and Philosopher call'd Helvidius Priscus, surfer'd Death upon the Account of his insolent and seditious Practices; and the rest of his Sect following his Steps, Vespasian

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spasian thought fit to banish all the Philosophers out of the City, besides Musonius Rusus. Not long after, Demetrius the Cynick meeting the Emperor upon the Road, would shew him no Respect, but proceeded so far as to revile him openly; but he generously pass'd it by, inflicting no other Punishment upon him, than the bare stiling him by the Title of Dog, as alluding to the Name of his Sect. In the fol-A. D. lowing Year, Vespasian join'd his Son Titus with him in the Quality of Cenfor, and they two made the last publick Census, or Numbering of the Roman Citizens that was ever known; in which Pliny observes that several Persons were found of an extraordinary Age, particularly of 110, of 120, of 130, of 140, and two of 150 Years. Which may make us less wonder at the Age of many of the Ecclefiasticks, and Saints of this Time; particularly of St. John, St. Ignatius, Simeon, Quadratus, and others, who faw Jesus Christ in the Flesh, yet liv'd 'till the Reigns of Trajan and Adrian.

> In this Year it is suppos'd that the Evangelist Luke dy'd, having after St. Paul's Death preach'd the Gospel with great Success in Agypt and Lybia, according to some, and also in Dalmatia, Galatia, Italy, and Macedonia, according to others. As to his Death, some fix it in one Place, and fome in another; and whether he dy'd a natural or violent Death, we have no certain Account: Yet most do assert his Martyrdom, and Nicephorus affares us, That being in Greece, a Party of Infidels made Head against him, drew him to Execution, and for want of a Cross, hang'd him upon an Olive-Tree, in the 84th Year of his Age, according to St. Ferom. And thus we have given as true an Account as we can find, of the Actions and Deaths of all the Apostles and Evangelists, besides John and Simon. And as for the former, we shall speak of him afterwards; but for the latter, we are told by some, that he went into Ægypt, Cyrene and Africa, and that after many Converts made there, he travell'd into Lybia and Mauritania, where he not only display'd the Glory of Jesus Christ by his Preaching, but by a great Number of Miracles. From these Countries he is faid to have gone into Britain, where having converted and baptized great Multitudes to the Faith, he was, after many other Persecutions, crucify'd by the Infidels, and bury'd there. Others give a different Account of his Death, fo that we can have no Certainty either of the Time or the Manner of it. God has thought fit to conceal from us, the holy Actions and Lives of many of his choicest Ser-

76.

vants, that we may be fatisfy'd in having our religious Deeds known to him alone, and not like the Scribes and Pharifees affect the Praise of Men. His Feast is kept with St. Jude's on October 28th, but the Greeks celebrate it on

June 10th.

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All Things now being in a quiet and peaceable Condi- A. D. tion in the Roman Empire, Vespasian in the 6th Year of his 75. Reign confecrated his famous Temple of Peace, which he Vesp. began immediately after the Destruction of Ferusalem. Having beltow'd great Charges upon it, he also beautify'd it with divers Pictures and carved Works, placing all the Ra- 70feph. rities in it that in former Ages had been gather'd together from the utmost Parts of the Earth. And among these he Plac'd all the golden Vessels, and other rich Utensils which the Jews had in their Temple, expressing a great Veneration for them; but the Jewish Law, and the Tapestry or purple Veils of the Sanctuary he commanded to be kept in the Palace. At this Time the Jews began in some Meafure to recover their Misfortunes, tho' they lost all the Benefit of Jerusalem, erecting a famous School at Jabneh near Joppa, where they still retain'd their great Sanhedrim, which, as Dr. Lightfoot says, they kept up in the same Lustre and State, as it had been for many Years before the City's Ruin. It feems, Jochanan Vice-Prelident of the Sanhedrim, escaping by a Stratagem from Jerusalem in the Siege, afterwards obtain'd so much Favour from the Emperor, that this Asfembly might be fix'd at Jabneh, where it had been for some few Years before the Jewish Wars. This being al-This being allow'd, he was made President of the Sanhedrim, and in this Year was succeeded by Gamaliel II. the Assembly being continu'd at this Place 'till the Reign of the Emperor Adrian.

The three following Years afford us very few Materials A. D. proper for our Purpose. In the first, Eusebins in his Chronicon mentions the Destruction of three Cities in the Isle Vesp. of Cyprus by a great Earthquake; of which Salamis and Paphos were two; Cities sufficiently enlightned by the Apofiles Paul and Barnabas, if they had made the best Use of their Doctrine. In the second, Pliny the Elder dedicated A. D. his great Work the History of Nature to the Emperor's 77. Son Titus, now the fixth Time Conful, near four Years Vesp. after he had celebrated the last Lustrum or Census in Rome. About the same Time Eusebius tells us that so great a Pestilence rag'd in Rome, that for many Days together, there dy'd 10000 in a Day; during which Plague, a Woman nam'd

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nam'd Alcipa was deliver'd of an Elephant. The third we find most remarkable for the Impostor Peregrinus, a Cynick Philosopher, who pretended a great Veneration for the Christian Religion, into which he was baptiz'd; and he made Profession of it with such a seeming Zeal, that he procur'd himself to be imprison'd by the Pagan Power, in which he made a great Shew of Patience and Refignation. And being once a Person of considerable Note, he by his Agents procur'd large Contributions from the Christians in many Places; after which he return'd again to his Paganism, got free from his Imprisonment, and derided the Christians for having greatly enrich'd him at their Expences. But long afterwards, being univerfally hated and rejected, he fell into great Poverty; and at the Olympick Games, excited by a diabolical Vanity, he is faid to have leap'd alive into the Fire, like the Indian Brachmans. In all Probability this is the same Person against whom the

Scoffer Lucian wrote with fo much Satyr.

In the next Year 79, Vespasian being now in his ninth Consulship, and his Son Titus in his seventh, and having perform'd many great and noble Acts, to the happy Establishment of the Empire, was surpriz'd at Campania with fome light Motions of a Distemper, when immediately he cry'd out, according to the Dictates of his Pagan Principles, Methinks I am going to be a God. His Indisposition caus'd him to remove to the City, from whence he retir'd to Cutyliae, and an Estate he had about Reate, which he ufually visited every Summer. In which Place, notwithstanding the Encrease of his Distemper, he still manag'd the Affairs of the Empire as formerly: But having corrupted his Entrails by the Use of cold Water, he was after a short Time suddenly taken with a Flux, which soon brought him to fuch Weakness, that he was ready to faint; when of a fudden he cry'd out with his former Courage and Bravery, An Emperor ought to die standing on his Feet; and so raising himself up, he expir'd in the Hands of those who supported him. His Death was highly lamented, and his Memory gratefully preserv'd by all the great and wise Men of the Empire, being a Prince of extraordinary Management and Moderation, next to Julius Cafar in War, and to Augustus in Peace; one whom Providence seem'd to have rais'd on purpose for the Recovery and Restauration of the Romans, and the Ruin and Desolation of the Jews; and one who acted nothing against the Christians, but as they were accidentally involv'd under the Notion of Jews. He was the fecond

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fecond Roman Emperor that dy'd a natural Death, it being in the 69th Year of his Age, and on the 24th Day of June; having reign'd ten Years wanting fix Days, reckoning from the first of July 69, when he was first proclaim'd Emperor at Alexandria.

Upon the Decease of Vespasian, his eldest Son Ti- A. D. tus, now near 39 Years of Age, succeeded by general Con-79. fent, as well as by his Father's Will, tho' not without TITUS. fome Obstructions from his ambitious Brother Domitian. The electric Tho' Titus had serv'd in many Wars with great Honour, man Emand discharg'd many civil Offices with no less Wisdom, peror. vet during his Father's Reign he had given too many Snet. Occasions of Prejudice and Aspersion, upon the Account of his Severity, and voluptuous Life, his extravagant Paffion for Agrippa's Sister Bernice, and his promoting his Father's Impositions and Extortions; insomuch that he was generally look'd upon as a fecond Nero; and scarce any Man arriv'd at the Empire with a more fully'd Reputation, or a greater Repugnancy of the People. But in a short Time these Accusations turn'd all to his Advantage, and his Virtues gain'd him a Reputation under the Burthen of an Empire, which he cou'd not obtain under the Freedom of a private Person; in which he proceeded with so much Prevalence upon the Hearts and Affections of all People, that he came to be generally stil'd, The Love and Delight of Mankind. He began first with the moderating his Passions. and bridling his strong Inclinations; particularly withdrawing himfelf from the Company of his beloved Queen Bernice, and discharging several Persons who were formerly the chief Instruments of his Pleasures, rightly judging them unbecoming the Dignity of his Office. In all which Matters, he shew'd such a happy Mixture of firm Resolution, and easie Modesty, that of him it was said, That if ever any Man truly abstain'd from what his own, He was the Person. The Excellency of his Temper has been applauded by Writers of all Ages, and St. Augustine stil'd him by the Title of a most sweet Prince; and when he enter'd upon the Office of Pontifex Maximus, he solemnly protested, That he did it to keep his Hands pure and undefil'd from Blood. One of his principal Methods was never to fend away any Petitioner with an unpleasing Answer, declaring, That no Man ought to depart sorrowful from the Presence of a Prince; and he was naturally fo defirous of doing Good, that one Night being told he had done nothing for any Person that Day, he thus readily express'd his Concern, My Friends, I have

lost a Day! A Sentence worthy of an Emperor, and even of a Christian.

Titus in the Beginning proceeded with all Wisdom and Diligence in the great Affairs of the Publick, particularly in the regulating and reforming of several Mischiefs, which had not been perfectly remov'd in his Father's Reign; amongst which that of Informers, Promoters, and Pettifoggers was very notorious, who had their Rife from the Licentioulnels and Impunity of former Reigns, and daily encreafing in Corruptions, became the Authors and Fomenters of all Kinds of Heats and Diffentions. Of these this Emperor daily made publick Examples, condemning them to be fcourg'd and beaten with Clubs in the publick Forum, then to be dragg'd through the Theatre, and at last, part to be fold as Slaves, and part to be transported to uninhabited Islands, till he had utterly exterminated those Pests of the City. And to put a farther Stop than his Father had to the Corruptions and Tediousness of Law-Suits, he prohibited, among other Things, that the fame Cause shou'd be try'd by several Laws; or that any one shou'd enquire into the Estate of any dead Person, after a set and precise Number of Years. Notwithstanding the Excellency and Mildness of the prefent Government, we are told that Linus, St. Peter's, or perhaps St. Paul's Successor, suffer'd Martyrdom this Year in Rome; tho' most probably without the Emperor's Knowledge. The Year of his Death is uncertain; yet Eusebius politively fixes it in the second of Titus, or, as Mr. Dodwell regulates it, the first; after he had been Bishop of Rome, or perhaps only of the Gentile Converts in Rome, twelve Years; to which others add 4 Months and 12 Days. He was succeeded by Anacletus or Cletus, who held the Bishoprick about twelve Years longer.

In the short Reign of this Emperor, there hapned some Missortunes and Calamities no less associating than deplorable. The first was a dreadful and almost incredible Irruption of Mount Vesavius in Campania, in the Beginning of November, which was accompany'd with violent Earthquakes, and wonderful Prodigies; and after it had ruin'd many Ciries and People with a vast Tract of Land, the Asses were carry'd through the Air into many distant Nations, particularly Africk, Egypt and Syria, being so very great at Rome, that the Sun was darkned for many Days together. At this Mount, Pliny the Elder, and famous natural Historian, then Admiral of the Roman Navy at Miseroa, being desirous to discover the Reason of this wonder.

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1 Accident, by his too near approaching it, and his too reat Curiofity, was fuffocated in the Smoak. Besides this rrible Calamity, in the following Year, there hapned a reat Fire in Rome, which lasted three Days, and as many ights inceffantly, confuming the Capitol, the Temples of Titi. rapis, Isis, and Neptune, the Pantheon, and the Library Augustus, with many other noble Buildings; God hereevidently shewing his Displeasure against the Romans for eir false Deities, the Cause both of their Vices, and their pluntary Blindness against the Light of the Gospel. as also succeeded by a dangerous Pestilence, sin which ere commonly dy'd ten thousand every Day; which ague was suppos'd to have been occasion'd by the Ashes Mount Vesuvius. In all these Miseries Titus behav'd mself not only with the Care and Regard of a Prince, but To with the Tenderness and Compassion of a Father, comrting the Distressed with his reviving Edicts, and affishing em as his own Revenues wou'd permit. Then to abate e Pestilence, and the Malignity of that Distemper, there were no Methods either human or divine that he neglectd, feeking all Sorts of superstitious Rites, and all Kinds. of Sacrifices, which he thought might be of any imaginable

Ife; in which he shew'd the Height of Paganism. In this Year Titus confer'd particular Honours upon the Josephi elebrated Josephus, tho' his Countrymen were in very low eputation with the Romans. His Father Vespasian had ewn great Respect to him, after the Jewish Wars, lodg'd m in his own House, made him a free Citizen of Rome, aligned him a Pension, gave him Lands in Judea, and above all order'd him a publick Statue. Titus increas'd thefe avours, and in Honour to him, order'd his History of the ars of the Jews now finish'd, to be deposited in the pubck Library, and to be view'd by all Men; after it had een carefully examin'd by himself, King Agrippa, and may others. The Writings of this Author have been highly alu'd by Jews, Gentiles and Christians, shewing a very ne and polite Pen; and the Turn he gave to Things was streamly agreeable. His History is enrich'd with admirae Descriptions, most eloquent Speeches, and most sublime houghts; his Narration is clear and just; and, as one bserves, he not only diverts his Readers, but also inclines hem on which Side he pleases, raising and laying such lotions in them as he thinks sit. In short, his Genius and ccomplishments render'd him the most illustrious of his ountrymen; so that he may be said to have been a finish'd nd compleat Historian, and might well be still, as he is VOL. II.

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by many, The Livy of the Greeks. As for his History of the Wars of the Jews, which we are now speaking of, it is a continu'd Story from the Taking of Jerusalem by Antiochus Epiphanes, down to the utter Ruin of it by Titus, beginning about 170 Years before our Saviour's Nativity, and reaching to the Year 72, confifting in all of 242 Years. But the most considerable and valuable Part of it is that of the fix last Years, where he describes the last Jewish War, the Destruction of Jerusalem, and the Miseries of his Countrymen in the most lively and affecting Manner imaginable, in which also is fully shewn the Completion of our blessed Saviour's Prophesies. And whoever wou'd carefully compare what our Lord has faid concerning this War and Sackage of Jerusalem, with the Accounts thereof given by Josephus, might find so just a Correspondency between the Prophecy, and the Completion, as wou'd make him imagine that the Historian had taken his Measures as much from our Lord's Predictions, as from the Event of Things: So that the History is highly useful for the Con-

viction either of Jews or Pagans.

In the following Year 81, the Emperor Titus, having been faluted Imperator the fifteenth Time, liv'd not long to enjoy that Honour, being suddenly snatch'd away, to the exceeding Detriment of the Empire, and to the unexpressible Grief of his Subjects. Not long before, at the finishing of certain publick Solemnities, in which he wept plentifully before the People, he retir'd into the Territories of the Sabines, somewhat more melancholy than formerly, being discourag'd by some unfortunate Omens. In his first Stage he was surpriz'd with a violent Feaver, and being carry'd afterwards in his Litter, and finding that he must submit to Death, he cou'd not refrain shewing his great unwillingness to depart; and looking up to Heaven, with an uncommon Tenderness complain'd, That he shou'd be taken away so undeservedly; protelling, That in the whole Course of his Life, he did not know of any Action but One that he ought to repent of, which he did not mention. Shortly after he dy'd, in the same Town where his Father dy'd, not without Suspicion of Poison from his Brother Domition. This was accompany'd with an universal Grief and Sadness throughout the City and Empire; and all the Senators without any legal or regular Convocation, hasted to the Senate House, and shutting the Doors for a Time, open'd them again, render'd more Thanks and Acknowledgments, heap'd upon his Memory more Praises and Encomiums, than ever any Emperor obtain'd, either before or after his Death. He dy'd

Suet.

Chap. VIII. DOMITIAN the 12th Rom. Emp. 433

dy'd in the Year 81, in the 13th Day of September, under the Confulships of Silvanus and Verus, being in the 41st Year of his Age, and having reign'd only two Years, two Months and twenty Days.

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. The venerable Respect all had for Titus and his A. D. Father, caus'd his Brother Domitian to succeed him without Opposition, being now about thirty Years of Age. The Domi-Pride and Ambition of this Prince shortly appear'd in his TIAN, declaring in open Senate, That it was he who had given the the 12th Empire both to his Father and Brother, and that they had Roman Emperor. but restor'd it to him again. Yet the Beginning of his Reign was generally acceptable to the People, he shewing so little Signs of Cruelty and Bloodshed, that he once resolv'd by Edict to forbid the facrificing of Oxen, and also so lictle of Avarice, that his chiefest Advice to them about him was to abhor all Rapine and Sordidness. At first indeed, his Vices and Enormities were happily temper'd by many wife and good Actions; in which Time he spent and employ'd many of his Hours in divers Kinds of Exercises and Diversions, particularly Archery and the like Games, in which he excell'd to Admiration. But we must not omit one despicable Regreation of his, of which all Authorstake Notice; and that was his usual Custom of retiring an Hour in a Day into his Chamber, in the Beginning of his Reign, where his fole Employment was catching of Flies, and pricking them through with a sharp Bodkin; A great Argument of a cruel, and melancholy Temper. And afterwards this Temper was more shewn to Men than to Flies, and even to those of the highest Rank and Quality; and when the Vizor was taken off, he appear'd in his proper Colours, lazy and unactive, ill-natur'd and fulpicious, griping and voracious, and barbarous and infolent to the utmost Degree. In his Fierceness and Brutality he equall'd Nero, and in this particular exceeded him; that Nero was fatiffy'd with commanding Execution to be done at a Distance, whereas this Tyrant took Pleasure in beholding his Cruelties exercis'd before his Eyes; which at length prov'd his only Diversion; for he did not, like Nero, delight in the Charms of Musick and such kind of Pleasures as wou'd naturally iweeten his morofe Humour. In his Cunning and Diffimulation he refembled Tiberius; for he was not only herce and implacable, but also exceeding subtle and artificial in furprizing, never pronouncing any difinal Sentence, but with an infimuting Presmble full of great Clemency and Mercy; to that whenfoever he appear a kind

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and gentle in the Prologue, he certainly prov'd cruel and

bloody in the Epilogue.

A. D. About the latter End of the first Year of this Emperor's 82. Reign, the Apostle John, being principally at Ephesus, and Dom.

having establish'd many Churches in Asia, is said to have constituted his eminent Disciple Polycarp Bishop of Smyrna, at this Time. But the Time of this Apostle's coming into Asia is very uncertain, tho' most probably it was about the Year 70; and his usual Residence at Ephefus caus'd him to be call'd sometimes the Bishop of the City. But fince the Apostolick Authority was superior to that of Bishops, he did not confine himself to the Church of Ephesus in particular, but took Care of all the Asian Churches; nor did his Abode at Ephesis deprive Timothy of his Episcopal Authority, which St. Paul had formerly conferr'd upon him. Many Churches of Note and Eminency were of his Foundation and Erection, besides Smyrna, particularly Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, which together with Ephesus, make up the feven Churches which he mentions in his Revelations. Apollonius, who defended the Church in the Beginning of the third Age, affures us that this Apostle rais'd a Man from the Dead at Ephelus, and depos'd a Priest of Asia for writing the fabulous Voyages of St. Paul and Thecla, although he compos'd that Work in Honour of St. Paul, to whom he attributes them. St. Epiphanius affirms, That he was carry'd into Asia by the special Conduct of the Holy Spirit, to oppose the Heresies of the Ebionites and Cerinthians; and Irenaus relates a Story, which he had from his Disciple Polycarp, That going with some Friends at Ephesus to a Bath, and finding Cerinthus the Arch-Heretick there before him, he with great Abhorrency turn'd back, crying out, Let us escape immediately, lest the Building fall upon our Heads, since Cerinthus the Enemy of God and his Truth is in it: By this Example teaching us to avoid the Society of fuch as publickly abuse and corrupt the Truth. This is. all that we find of this beloved Apostle, from his coming into Afra, to the second general Persecution.

In this Year 82, the Emperor Domitian taking upon him the Office of Cenfor, and the Reformation of Manners, perform'd many Things worthy of a better Man; particularly, he suppress'd such Libels and defamatory Writings as any ways reflected upon Persons of Quality of either Sex. He turn'd a Senator out of the House, purely for his immoderate Delight in Buffoonry and Dancing; judging those Qualities below the Dignity of that venerable Order.

Dian. Suet.

Chap. VIII. DOMITIAN the 12th Rom. Emp. 405

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Order. From fuch Women as were light and fcandalous in their Lives he took away the Privilege of Litters, and their Capacities of Legacies and Inheritance; and struck a Roman Knight out of the List of the Judges, for receiving his Wife after she had been divorc'd for such a Crime as Adultery. He was very diligent for a while in the Administration of Justice, and many Times sat himself in an extraordinary Manner in the Courts of Judicature, fuperfeding the Partial Sentences of the Centumviri. He severely punish'd such Judges and Counsellors as were corrupt, and acted by Bribes; and in these Matters he was so careful, as to encourage the Tribunes in Person to accuse a particular Adile of Extortion, and to demand Justice against him in the Senate. He pursued his Father's and Brother's Designs as to the reforming of tedious Law-Suits, and in banishing Delators and Promoters; and discharg'd such as had been fued in the Exchequer five Years before, and had their Suits still depending, not allowing any new Process but within a Year's Space; and with this particular Caution, that if the Informer made not his Charge good, he shou'd suffer Banishment. He likewise prohibited the Castration of Children; and of such as were already Eunuchs, and in the Possession of the Merchants, he moderated the Prices, and reduc'd them to a more reasonable Rate. In all which Regulations he shew'd great Pride and Contempt of his Father's, and Brother's Management. Therefore in the next Year, because the Whoredoms of the Vestal Virgins had A. D. been accidentally neglected by his Father and Brother, he made a strict Enquiry after those Corruptions, and punish'd Dom. them without Mercy. Such as were convicted but once, fuffer'd Death as other ordinary Malefactors; but others were bury'd alive, according to the ancient Custom, and their affociate Male-Criminals scourg'd to Death. Year a great Earthquake near the Hellespont gave an opportunity to the Magicians, Chaldeans and Agyptians, to inrich themselves from the People's Bounty, under Pretence of offering Sacrifices to appeale the Gods. And in the fame Year Domitian shew'd so great a Hatred to Philosophers, Mathematicians and Astrologers, that he not only banish'd them out of Rome, but likewise out of all Italy, persecuting them with such Fury, that they were constrain'd to fly to many Nations.

By Reason of the Loss of so many Ecclesiastical Re- A. D. cords, the following Year affords us nothing but the bare 84. Mention of the Death of Anianus, the first Bishop of Alex- Dom. andria next to St. Mark; who after 22 Years excellent 3

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Tortures, fuch as were never practis'd before. In this Year Eusebius speaks of his Anger against the Philosophers and Astrologers, whom he a second Time banished out of Rome and Italy; which he did as much out of Hatred to Literature, as for any laudable Pretence. For his Jealousies extended to all Writers and Learned Men, especially Historians, whom he punish'd for their due Praises of Illustrious Persons; and justly dreaded them, lest they shou'd record his vicious Actions: Only the great Fosephus, by a happy Fortune and Address, retain'd his Favour and Encouragement as long as he liv'd.

In the following Year, it is believ'd by fome, that Do-

A. D. 90. Dom.

A. D. 91. Dom. 10.

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mitian began to vent his Rage against the Christians, and to raise the second general Persecution against the Church. But tho' it is probable he might now begin to express his Hatred to that Sect, yet the best Chronologers are agreed, that the Persecution began not 'till five Years after, in 95. In the Year 91, the Roman Forces having after many great Losses, finish'd the Wars against the Dacians, and also the Catti a People of Germany, Domitian obtain'd a Triumph, which was attended with many superstitious Rites, as well as glorious Spectacles, Naval Contests, and Combats of Women as well as Men. He likewise vainly assum'd the Name of Germanicus, and caus'd the two Months September and October to be call'd Germanicus and Domitianus, because in one of them he was made Emperor, and in the other he was born. At the same Time he shut up the Temple of Fanus in Token of an universal Peace, this being the third Time that it was thut fince our Saviour's Nativity. In the same Year he executed Cornelia the Head of the Vestal Virgins for Incontinency; she being condemn'd to be bury'd alive, according to the ancient Custom, and her Affociate-Male-Criminals to be scourg'd to Death.

A. D. 92. Dom.

II 12.

The Christians were flourishing and increasing in Rome, Cletus or Anacletus in the Beginning of 92, or the latter End of or, fuffer'd Martyrdom, after he had been Bishop of Rome above 12 Years. He was succeeded by the famous Clement or Clemens, of whom we have formerly taken notice, who is frequently call'd the third Bishop of Rome after St. Peter, yet with no little Uncertainty. For many are of Opinion, as we formerly hinted, that before the Deaths of the Apostles Peter and Paul, the Church at Rome was divided into two Catus; one confisting of Jewish Converts under St. Peter, and the other of Gentile Converts under St. Paul; and that upon their Deaths, Linus succeeded St. Peter, and Clement St. Paul: But that afterwards, when

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the Distinction of Jew and Gentile fail'd, upon the Death of Cletus, there was a Coalition of both the Cœtus under the surviving Bishop Clement; so that in that Sense he may be call'd the third Bishop of Rome, after the Apostles. And tho' this well grounded Opinion is doubted and deny'd by fome, especially the Romanists, yet it is plain that nothing will so well solve the different Accounts of the Succession of the first Bishops of Rome. While Clement was sole Bishop of Rome, it is believ'd that that celebrated Book call'd A. D. Pastor was written by Hermas, a Roman Convert, and most probably the same mention'd by St. Paul, Rom. 16. 14. Tho' Dom. the Time of its writing is very uncertain, yet all agree that it was witten before the Persecution under this Emperor; and some think that the fourth Vision is a Prophecy of it; and others, that it foretold the Destruction of Ferusalem; which if true, it must have been written above twenty Years before this Time: But of that we shall not dispute. This Book was in great Esteem among the Ancients, many of the Fathers have accounted it as part of the Holy Scriptures, and feveral Churches receiv'd it as Canonical. But many others have rejected it for fuch; and the Moderns have had far less Opinion of its worth, it being so disagreeble to the Relish and Palates of the latter Ages. It consists of three Parts; the first of which, entituled the Visions, is full of many Revelations explain'd to Hermas by a Woman reprefenting the Church; all relating to the State of the Church, and the Manners of the Christians. The second Part, which is most useful and intelligible, is call'd the Ordinances; wherein are compriz'd divers Precepts of Morality and Pious Instructions, which the Pastor or Angel of Hermas pre-scribes to him. The third Part is call'd the Similitudes; because it begins with several Similes or Comparisons, and concludes with Visions. These three Books comprehend many Moral Instructions concerning the Practice of Christian Virtues; but the great Number of Visions, Allegories and Similitudes, make them tedious and uncouth; and far less agreeable to our Tasts, than if they had been simply propounded.

About the Beginning of the Year 94, or the latter End A. D. of 93, and 13th of Domitian, Josephus finish'd his great Work call'd, The Antiquities of the Jews, in twenty Books; Dom. being a continu'd History from the Creation of the World to the Beginning of the last Jewish War in the Year 66; containing, according to A. B. Usher's Chronology, 4069 Joseph. Years. It is written with wonderful Art and Eloquence, admirably adapted to the Genius and Tempers of the Ro-

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mans and Grecians; and particularly his Account of the Miseries of Herod in the Dissentions of his Family, and of the Death of the Emperor Caligula, have been admired by many Criticks. Above one half of it is taken from the Books of the Old Testament, but he has ventur'd to add several Facts not in those Writings, about which the Learned are not agreed: And as to those that he has wholly taken from them, he oftentimes gives them fuch an artificial Turn, and us'd fuch disguising and mollifying Stroaks, as shew'd that he durst not always follow Truth rigidly; but that he defign'd to accommodate the most surprizing Pasfages in the Holy Scriptures to the Humour and Opinions of the Persons to whom he wrote. Yet after all these Imperfections, it must be acknowledg'd to be a noble Work, and undoubtedly was highly advantageous to the better fort of the Gentiles, who might be induc'd to read this, when they despis'd the Scriptures; and this being an excellent Preparative and Incitement to the other, it cou'd not fail of making those Sacred Writings, and the Works of Providence more known, and consequently Christianity by degrees more acceptable. As to that Passage, wherein our Saviour is honourably mention'd, we shall not enter into the Dispute of its Genuiness; but only observe, that it is certainly very ancient; and tho' fome modern Criticks have doubted of it, and argu'd against it, yet we do find that any of the Ancients ever did. Josephus wrote, besides his own Life and the Wars of the Jews, two excellent Treatises against Appion, as a Reply to the Heathen against the Antiquity of the Jews, the Purity of their Law, and the Conduct of Moses; and a Treatise concerning the Martyrdom of the Maccabees, which Erasmus justly stiles a Master-piece of Eloquence. Being in the 76th Year of his Age, shortly after his writing the Antiquities of the Jews, this great Man dy'd.

About the same time, Domitian again banish'd all the Philosophers and Astrologers out of Rome and Italy, among whom was that celebrated Stoick Epictetus. Shortly after this Decree, we are told, that the famous Philosopher and Magician Apollonius Tyanaus, was sent for to Rome by the Emperor, upon pretence of his Sacrificing a Child, and his foretelling Nerva to be Emperor; and that being brought before Domitian, after some little Discourse, he vanish'd out of his fight, and was found at Puteoli, three Days Journey from Rome. Philostratus has given us an Account of this at large, and also of the Life of Apollonius; in which he relates many strange Stories, both as to the Innocence of I.

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his Life, and as to the Miracles he wrought. Infomuch that Hierocles, and some other Enemies to Christianity proceeded fo far as to compare this Magician to our Saviour himself, and endeavour'd to set him up as a Rival to him in his Actions: Tho' after all we have scarce any other Account of his Actions but from one Person, upon whose Authority we cannot much rely. This is suppos'd to have been done in the 14th of Domitian, under the Confulship of Asprenas and Lateranus, a little before the second General Persecution of the Church, near 25 Years after the De-Aruction of Ferusalem.

CHAP. IX.

From the Beginning of the second General Persecution of the Church, to the third, and to the Death of St. John the last surviving Apostle; which concluded the first Century.

Containing the Term of about five Years.

The SECOND GENERAL PERSECUTION.

Omitian, who imitated the Vices and Cruelties A. D. of Nero, did also imitate him in his Hatred to the Church of God; and to compleat all his Dom. former Wickedness, in the Beginning of this Year, rais'd the second General Persecution of the Christians. His Letters and bloody Edicts were publish'd through all Parts of Euch. the Empire, which caus'd the Banishment and Death of great D.on. Numbers both in Rome, and other places; But Mr. Dodwell believes that this Persecution went no farther than Banishment; to which Monf. Tillemont and others have given a particular Answer. Several are of Opinion, that by Hermus's Book call'd Pastor, God thought fit to forewarn the Church of this great Tribulation, that the Christians might prepare themselves for the Conflict, and at length be purg'd from the Corruptions, that too many of them had contracted. This Persecution began in the fourteenth Year of this Emperor's Reign, thirty one Years after the first under Nero; in which many eminent Christians suffer'd: Particularly Antipas, in Pergamus, one of the seven Churches of St. John's Erection;

on; a Person to whom Jesus Christ was pleas'd to give the Title of a Faithful Martyr, Rev. 2. 13. and Dionysius the Areopagite, St. Paul's Convert, and first Bishop of Athens; who fuffer'd many Torments, as well as Death it felf. This last was succeeded by Publius, whom some suppose to have been the Governor of Melita, formerly converted by St. Paul. Domitian was not fatisfy'd with destroying the Heads of the Church, but proceeded to the Execution of his own Relations; particularly, his Cousin-german Flavius Clemens, in the very Year of his Consulship, whom he put to Death for embracing Christianity, and banish'd this Consul's Wife Domitilla to the Island Pandataria, and his Niece of the fame Name to Pontia. Which was succeeded by the Deaths and Banishments of great Numbers of others in Rome.

Nothing render'd this Persecution so memorable as the famous Sufferings of the Apostle John, the Courage by which he conquer'd all the Power of his Persecutors, shew'd that the eternal Word, which he so frequently preach'd to others, did really abide in him. It is faid, that the Calumnies which were brought to Domitian against him, as a Disturber of the Peace of the Empire, caus'd him to order the Proconful of Asia to send him bound to Rome, where he treated him with all the Cruelty that Rage cou'd fuggest; for, according to Tertullian, he commanded him be cast into a Cauldron of boiling Oil, or rather Oil fet on Fire, and this, as others affure us, in the Presence of all the Roman Senate. But Jesus Christ, who favour'd him above all the Apostles, so preserv'd him in this great Danger that he felt no Harm from it, but as if he had only been anointed, as the Athletæ were, according to St. Ferom, he came out more active and vigorous than before, thus giving him the Honour of Martyrdom, without suffering the Torments of it, or leaving it in the Power of Man to take his Life. In this illustrious Manner was accomplish'd what our Lord had foretold, That he shou'd drink of the Cup of his Passion. And from hence the Ancients give him the Title of a Martyr; for the Martyrdom had no Power over him, yet he yielded his Body to all its Torments, and was willing to die for Christ; and as the three Children cast into the fiery Furnace were Martyrs in their Intentions, tho' the Fire confum'd not their Bodies; so was John in his Will, tho not in his Sufferings, God miraculously preserving him beyond his Hopes, or Defires. The cruel Emperor being difappointed in his Intentions, hardned himself against the Evidence of the Miracle, and without any farther Confideration banish'd him into the desolate Isle of Patmos, one of

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the Sporades in the Ægean Sea, there to be employ'd in digging in the Mines, according to Victorinus, the usual La-

bour of Persons banish'd thither for any Crime.

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In this disconsolate Place God fill'd his Mind with spiritual Comforts, and as if he had been translated from Earth to Heaven, open'd the Cabinet of Glory to him, giving him a clear Prospect of the future State of Christianity in those excellent Revelations by feveral Visions, which are transmitted to us in the Book of that Name: Which was not the least Instance of our Lord's Favour to this Apostle. This Book was written, as it is most generally believ'd, a- A. D. bout the Beginning of the Year 96; and in a Prophetical 96. Stile, with peculiar, and uncommon Expressions. The first Dom. Part confilts of Admonition and Instruction, as well as 15. Prophesie, being directed to the seven Churches in Asia, which this Apoltle had principally founded, namely, Ephe-Sus, Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea: And the three first Chapters consist, not only of an Epistle from St. John, but also of seven other Epistles. one to each Church, dictated immediately, and fent by Christ himself; wherein Advice is given to the Bishops of these Places, who are there call'd Angels, concerning the State their Flocks. There are many clear Truths in this Book by which humble and plain Christians may profit, without concerning themselves with the Explanation of the Prophefies above their Capacities. As for those, we shall not prefume to unfold them, but only observe in general, That the Romanists look upon all the Propheties as already fulfill'd under the Pagan Emperors, inferring it from the first Verse of the Book, which speaks of Things which must shortly come to pass: But others interpret it, Things which must shortly begin to be fulfill'd. Some of the Ancients observing the Mysteriousness and Obscurity of this Book, have doubted whether it ought to be admitted into the Sacred Canon, because they were uncertain whether it was really the Apostle John's Writing or not; but this being made plainly to appear by a Multitude of Witnesses, scarce any one since the fourth Century has scrupled to receive it as Scripture. This Apostle in his Banishment, as Victorinus observes, seeing himself condemn'd to great Pains and Labour in an Age not able to undergo any Hardships, despair'd of Life, and hop'd to finish all with Death; but God was pleas'd to un- Rev. 10. deceive him by revealing to him, That he must prophesie be- 11. fore many People, and Nations, and Tongues, and Kings; by which his Enlargement was foreshewn, which hapned shortly after in the succeeding Reign.

Anet.

Enfib.

Still Domitian continu'd the Persecution, and among the Martyrs we find Mark, the first Bishop of Atina in Latium, who was struck into the Head with Tenter-hooks; Felicula, an illustrious Woman in Rame, whose Body was thrown into a common Sewer; and Nicodemus a Presbyter of the same City, who was beaten to Death. And now the Errors and Enormities of the Emperor became more conspicuous than ever, for he grew every Day more lazy and unactive, more insolent and revengeful, and like a thorough-pac'd Tyrant, insupportably jealous and suspicious of all Persons. The Predictions of the Chaldeans and other Aftrologers, concerning his Death, gave him violent Apprehensions; which, together with his numerous Crimes, kept him in perpetual Disquiet and Anxiety; so that at length he would admit of no Prisoner to be brought before him but with the most imaginable Care and Caution: And that his Domesticks might perceive how unsafe it was for a Man to attempt the Life of his Patron, upon any Pretence, he commanded Epaphroditus to be executed, for being suppos'd to affift Nero in his Death, tho' with his own Confent and Defire, Finally, his Jealousies increas'd to that Degree, that he caus'd his Gallery, in which he usually walk'd, to be fet about with a certain Stone call'd Phengites, by the Brightness of which he could discern what was done behind him by Reflexion, as in a Glass, His Severity extended to the Jews, as well as Christians, who were also prosecuted as Atheists and Disowners of the Gods; and he particularly commanded that the Posterity of David should be fought out and put to Death, like Herod exceedingly fearing the Coming of Christ. Upon this Account two Grand-Children of the Apostle St. Jude, and Kinfman of our Lord, were brought before him, Having confess'd themselves of the Line of David, he demanded what Possessions they had; and was answer'd, That they had but 39 Acres of Land, out of the Improvement of which they both paid him Tribute, and maintain'd themselves with their own hand Labour, as appear'd from the Roughness and Calloufness of their Hands, which they then shew'd, He then enquir'd of them concerning the Melliah, and the State and Nature of his Kingdom, and when and where it would commence. To which they reply'd, That his Kingdom was not of this World, nor of the Dominions of it, but Heavenly and Angelical, which would finally take place in the End of the World, when coming with great Glory, he would judge the Quick and the Dead, and reward all Men according to their Works. The Iffue was, that looking upon the Meanz

Meanness and Simplicity of the Men, as below his Jealoufies and Fears, he dismis'd them without any Severity against them; and Tertulian adds, that he immediately ceas'd
the Persecution against the Church by his Edict, which hapned just before his Death. These two were now look'd
upon not only as Kinsmen, but as Martyrs of our Lord,
and were honour'd of all, being preferr'd to Places of Authority and Government in the Church; and Julius Africanus, a samous Author of the third Century, says that he
learn'd several Things of Christ's Genealogy, of those who
were then his Kindred, according to the Flesh, and who
from Nazareth and Cocab in Judga, were dispers'd in di-

vers Parts of the World.

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Domitian now became daily tormented with terrible O- Dian, mens and Portents, which sometimes drove him to De-Suce. spair; but nothing more affected him than the Answer of Asceleterion, the Astrologer, and the strange Accident that enfu'd. For being accus'd to the Emperor of publishing Predictions of his Death, and not denying the Charge, Domitian ask'd him if he knew his Fortune, and what Death he himself should die; the Astrologer reply'd, That he should be devour'd by Dogs. To convince the World therefore, as he thought, of his Error, the Emperor caus'd him immediately to be flain, and commanded that he should be burnt with all possible Care; but while this was effecting, a furious Tempest suddenly arose, blew down the funeral Pile, and threw off the Body; upon which the Dogs caught it up, and devour'd it before it was half consum'd by the Fire. This Tyrant's Ruin was much promoted by Means of the unjust Death of his Coufin Clemens before mention'd, and hastned by Reason of an accidental Discovery of his own Wife Domitia, who fearthing into his black Table Book, found her own Name there, with many of his principal Friends. particularly Stephanus his Steward, Norbanus and Petronius, to whom she shew'd the Book, in Order to oblige them to These and several others were soon dispatch Domitian. persuaded into a deep Conspiracy, which they form'd and carry'd on with the greatest Diligence and Secrecy; among whom Szephanus and Parthenius were Principals, the latter being Domitian's chief Chamberlain, and the former for feveral Days wearing a fhort Dagger in his left Arm wrapt in Wool, pretending an accidental Hurt in that Place. Domitian had particular Notice long before of the very Night and the Hour of his Death, according to some; which as the Time approached, gave him the most imaginable Uneasiness.

easiness. At that Night when his Fears were greatest, he enquiring of his Attendants what Hour it was, they falfly told him Midnight, which was an Hour later than that which he apprehended. At which, being transported, as if all Danger was past, he hastned to his Bath for the Refreshment of his Body; but Parthenius with great Earnestness led him another Way, pretending he had a Person in his Chamber, who had a Matter of the highest Importance to discover to him, and which cou'd not fafely be deferr'd. In which Chamber he was met by Stephanus, who under Pretence of discovering a Conspiracy, presented Domitian with a Lift of several Names, affuring him that Clemens was still alive; and while he was reading it, he fuddenly struck his Dagger in his Groin. Whereupon the Emperor crying out, clos'd with him, and with great Violence threw him to the Ground before he cou'd give him another Wound; but in these Struglings Parthenius, Clodianus, Maximus, and Saturius, with other Conspirators, ran all furiously upon him, and with many Wounds dispatch'd this impious Tyrant in spite of all his Assurance and pretended Divinity. Thus did God's Vengeance meet with the second great Persecutor of his Church, who after his Death was farther punish'd by the Senate, who made a Decree, That no more Honour shou'd be shewn at his Funeral, than was allow'd to a common Ruffian; that all his Inscriptions shou'd be totally raz'd; that his Name shou'd be struck out of the Registers of Fame, and his Memory abolish'd for ever. He dy'd in the Year 96, on the 18th Day of September, under the Consulships of Valens and Vetus, being in the 45th Year of his Age, and having reign'd 15 Years and 5 Days. It is almost incredible what some Writers say concerning Apollonius Tyaneus, formerly mention'd, viz. that he being at Ephefus, at the same Minute that Domitian was flain, suddenly cry'd out before great Numbers, Courage, brave Stephanus! Strike the Tyrant home; and that immediately after he faid, All is well, the Tyrant is

A. D. The Roman Senate, after some Moderation of their 96. Joy for Domitian's Death, by the Affistance of Petronius Captain of the Pratorian Guards, created Cocceius Nerva Emperor, a Person of about 64 Years of Age, born in the Isle of Crete, and the first Emperor who was neither of a Roman, or Italian Family. He was a Man of fingular Honesty and Generosity, and of no less Moderation and Cle-Dion, &c. mency; and one of his first Acts was the rescinding the odious

dead, be is just now slain.

NER-VA, the thirteenth Rrman Em-

odious Decrees of his Predecessor, particularly recalling the dispersed Fews and Christians, who from Rome and other Cities were banish'd in the late Reign, nor disturbing them in the Use of their Religion. He shew'd the like Kindness and Humanity to all others unjustly banish'd by Domitian, likewise restoring all their Goods found about the Imperial Palace; and he not only shew'd himself liberal to the Oppressed, but he also caus'd great Numbers of poor Mens Sons to be bred up at his own Charges, and gave certain Lands for the Recovery of decayed Gentlemen. As an Instance of his Clemency, he solemnly swore, That no Senator of Rome sould be put to Death by his Commandment; which he so religiously observ'd, that when two of that Rank had conspired against his Life, he us'd no Severity against them; but to let them see the was not ignorant of their Designs, he carry'd them with him to the publick Theatre, plac'd them on each Side of him, and prefenting them with two Swords, he told them before all the People, That they might experience the Goodness of the Weapons upon his Body. Which, with other uncommon Acts of Clemency, gave Occasion to some to murmur at the Lenity of his Government, openly declaring, That it was a great Misfortune to live under that Reign where all Things were forbidden, but a worse under that where all Things were allow'd. This was particularly made known to the Emperor, who took Care accordingly; and during his thort Reign, made feveral good Laws and Ordinances; among which one was, that he strictly prohibited a common Abuse of that Age. the Caltration of Male Children; a Custom which Domition had likewife condemn'd, but not wholly remov'd. He also forbad that any Man should marry his Niece, which had been first allow'd in the Reign of Claudius; and settled several other Matters that wanted Reformation. He would not permit any Statues to be erected in his Honour, and took down all those Gold and Silver Statues of Domitian's. which the Senate had spared, and converted them to better Uses. His Symbol was, A good Mind possesses a Kingdom; and he had so great a Confidence in his own Innocency, that he often declar'd, That the be shou'd quit the Empire, and return to a private Life, he had acted nothing that could canfe bim to fear any Man.

We are told by Philostratus that this Emperor, in the Beginning of his Reign, sent to the famous Apollonius Tyaneus, to detire him to come and affist in his Council; but was answer'd, That they two sould not meet before Death. How-Vol. II.

Book II.

ever Apollonius wrote a Letter to him, full of wise Instructions, and the Arts of Government, which he fent by his Friend Damis, with other verbal Directions; and shortly after dy'd, in the latter End of this Year 96, or the Beginning of the next, being about an hundred Years of Age. As to the feveral Miracles faid to have been wrought by this Philosopher and Magician, his familiar Converse with Kings and Emperors, and the mighty Estimation, even to Adoration, which he is suppos'd to have obtain'd, as we hinted before, there is the greatest Uncertainty, and also Improbability: Therefore we have faid the less concerning

A. D. 97. Nervæ

In these Times of Indulgence and Toleration, the Church of God encreas'd exceedingly, and the Christians multiplying, became very numerous in most Parts of the Roman Empire. But notwithstanding the great Mildness of this Reign, it was not wholly without Martyrs, particularly the great Timothy Bishop of Ephesus, who after many Years Government of this Church, fuffer'd on the 22d or 24th of January. This we are affur'd by the Roman Martyrology, and his Acts attributed to Polycrates in the fecond Century, (tho' written in the fifth or lixth) which inform us, That Diana's Votaries celebrating a Festival call'd Catagogion, in which they carry'd about the Images of their Gods, and by Means of their Masks and Clubs committed a thousand Insolencies and Outrages; Timothy stood in the Streets to oppose and reprove this execrable Custom, which so inrag'd the People, that falling upon him with Stones and Clubs, they left him for dead: But some of the Christians finding him to breath, took him up, and lodg'd him without the Gate of the City, where in two Days he expired. Thus after infinite Labours and Difficulties, he dy'd in God's Cause, being the same Person whom St. John stiles, The Angel of the Church of Ephesus, and one of that Note and Eminency, that many have given him the Title of an Apostle. Shortly after his Death, the Apostle John, taking the Opportunity of those easie Times, being brought back from Patmos, return'd to his most intimate Friends at Ephesin. Finding Timothy dead, the Bishops of his Province desired him to take the Care of the Church upon him, which he accepted, and govern'd it 'till the Reign of Trajan. He was 90 Years of Age, according to Epiphanius, when he took this Care upon him; and notwithstanding his great Age, he went many Journies into the neighbouring Provinces to ordain Bishops, and settle and confirm Churches, as of the Virtue of Democratic

as Occasion requir'd, in this Manner governing all the

Churches of the Lesser Asia.

This Apostle having again undertaken the Government of the Church, wrote three several Epistles, and as it is generally believ'd, near the same Time; tho' as to that we cannot be very positive. The first of them is call'd Catholick, calculated as it were for all Times and Places, 'containing most excellent Rules for the Conduct of the Chrifian Life, preffing to Love and Charity, to Holiness and Purity of Manners, and not to rest in a naked and empty Profession of Religion, particularly not to be led away with the erafty Infinuations of Seducers and false Teachers, antidoting Men against the Gnostick, and other heretical Principles and Practices, to whom it is not to be doubted, but that the Apostle had a more particular Respect in this E-'pistle. According to his usual Modesty, he conceal'd his Name; yet this Epittle, as Eusebius tells us, was universally receiv'd and never question'd by any; and was anciently, as appears from St. Austin, inscrib'd to the Parthians, tho' for what Reason we are to learn, unless because he himself had formerly preach'd in those Parts of the World. It is look'd upon to be very like his Gospel, both as to the Matter and the Stile. His other two Epistles are very short; and some have doubted whether they are canonical, attributing them to another John; and this Dispute continu'd 'till the End of the fourth Century. But fince then, both Fathers and Councils have unanimously agreed to receive them as the Writings of this Apostle, because they breath out the same Spirit of Charity, and Zeal against Sin, as St. John's other Writings do. The first of the two is directed to a Christian Lady, which some think is nam'd Electa; wherein he commended her and her Childrens Pieties, 'encouraging them to Charity, exhorting them to Perseverance in good Works, and persuading them to shew a great Abhorrence of false Teachers and Deceivers, without so much as being hospitable to them or faluting them. Adding, that he was fo brief in his Instructions, because he design'd to see her " shortly. His last Epistle is directed to Gains or Cains, which some think was one of St. Paul's Disciples which, if true, it is more likely to be Gains of Derbe than of Corinth. In it he commended his Hospitality to the Faithful, exhorting him to exercise it chearfully to those veo fare employ'd in the Church's Service. He condemn'd the Ambition of Diotrephes, threatning, when he came, to punish his abusive Tongue severely; and highly approv'd of the Virtue of Demetrius, for which he was honour'd

of all men. John took not upon him the Title of Apostle in these two last Epistles, because they were written to private Friends, but call'd himself an Elder, probably from his great Age, which perhaps was not the Title he usually gave himself. St. Ferom speaking of St. John's, and the other general Epistles, gives this Character of them, That they are long and short, short in Words, long in Sense and Mysteries, which are so many and great, that few Perfons but are dazled by the View and Contemplation of them.

Besides these Epistles, the Apostle undertook a greater Work, in the same Year 97, according to the best Chronologers; and this was his Gospel, which many believe was the last of his Writings, and of all the Holy Scriptures. It was compos'd at the Request of several of his Disciples, almost all the Bishops of Asia, and all the Faithful of the neighbouring Provinces, who unanimously join'd in a Petition to him, to give an authentick Testimony to the Truth. His Modesty and a venerable Respect to those prosound Truths he was urg'd to treat of, made him backward in undertaking the Task; but the Importunity of the Afran Churches, who had severally sent their Deputies, and the fecret Influence of the Holy Ghost oblig'd him to venture upon the Work. He wou'd not begin it till they had appointed a publick Fast and Prayers, to implore the Assistance of God; and at the End of a profound Vision and Revelation, being fill'd with the Spirit, he broke out into those Words, In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. As the other three. Evangelists had shewn the Humanity of Fesia Christ, as he was King, Prophet, and Prieft, so this foar'd above them. and manifelted his Divinity. The Ancients assign two Rear fons especially for the writing of this Gospel: The first, that he might confound the early Herefies of those Times. especially of the Ebionites and Cerintbians, and the rest of that Party, who began openly to deny Christ's Divinity, and his Existence before his Incarnation; which Reason is affirm'd by Irenaus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Victorinus, St. Ferom. Epiphanius, and many others. The other Reason was, that he might supply those Passages of the Evangelical History, which the rest of the sacred Writers had omitted; which is afferted by Eusebius and St. Ferom. Collecting therefore the other Evangelists, and viewing them carefully, he first set his Seal and ratify'd the Truth of them, and then added his own Gospel to the rest, especially insisting upon

the Actions of our Saviour from his Temptation in the Wilderness, to the Imprisonment of John Baptist, wherein the others were most defective, scarce giving any Account of his first Year's Ministry. And as the Historical Part begins after our Saviour's Temptation, so the whole takes in a less Compass of Time than the least of the other Three, St. Mark; and tho' it appears to have been written to fupply the Defects and Omissions of the rest, recording our Saviour's Discourses, more than his Miracles, yet still the Order of Time is more carefully observ'd, and the four Passovers exactly distinguish'd, of which we have express Intimation but of one in the other Evangelists. The Subject of his Writing is very sublime and mysterious, manifesting Christ's Eternity, creating of the World, &c. upon which Account Theodoret stiles his Gospel, a Theology which human Understandings can never fully penetrate. Thence by the Ancients he is compar'd to an Eagle, foaring aloft within the Clouds, where the weak Eye of Man cou'd not follow him; hence he is peculiarly honour'd with the Title of The Divine, as if it were due to none but him, at least were due to him in a more eminent and extraordinary Manner. Nay the very Gentile Philosophers cou'd not but admire his Writings; and a certain Platonift faid, That the first Sentence of his Gospel ought to be written in Letters of Gold, and plac'd in the Front of all Churches. Another of them, nam'd Amedius, cites this Passage as an admirable Piece of Philosophy, equal to Plato's most divine Notions; and several of the most approv'd Philosophers have admir'd it, and inferted it in their Works. This Gofpel was always receiv'd by the Church as Canonical, and those who rejected it treated as Hereticks, under the Name of Alogi, or Enemies to the Word. It was written in Greek by St. John himself, and some say the Original Manuscript was at Ephefus in the 7th Century; but in the fourth, it was translated into Hebrew, and kept by the Jews in their Library at Tiberias. Dionysius Alexandrinus says concerning the Stife. That it was written according to the strictest Rules of the Greek Tongue, with Elegance of Words, Reasonings and Construction; having nothing in it barbarous or improper, flat or vulgar, tho' written with the greatest Simplicity; fo that God gave him not only Knowledge of the Mysteries he relates, but Abilities to express them fairly and fully.

About the Time of the writing this Gospel, dy'd Avili
m, the second Bishop of Alexandria after St. Mark, having

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happily govern'd that Church about thirteen Years. He was fucceeded by Cerdo, who is suppos'd to have been one of the three first Presbyters ordain'd by St. Mark: He held the Dignity about eleven Years, in whose Time the Numbers of the Christians exceedingly encreas'd in Agypt, Thebais, and Lybia. In this fame Year 97, Monf. Tillemont, contrary to the Opinion of Mr. Dodwell and some others, has plac'd the Writings of St. Clement's Epistle to the Corinthians, and not without good Reasons and Conjectures; but having already taken Notice of it in the Year 68, we shall not contend about a Thing of so little Certainty, and which is fo very hard to discover.

Dion.

Towards the latter End of this Year, the Emperor Nerva, finding his Soldiers mutinous upon the Account of Domitian's Murther, and himfelf declining in Years and Infirmities, resolv'd to adopt some worthy Person, who shou'd be able both to support him, and govern after his Decease. Tho' he had many considerable Friends and Relations, who hop'd for this high Dignity, yet like a just and generous Prince, he fought only the publick Good, and wisely made Choice of Ulpius Trajanus, an utter Stranger to his Family, then Governor of the Lower Germany, and the greatest and most deserving Person of that Age. Having iolemnly perform'd this about the 28th of October, he fent Ambassadors to him at Cologn with the Ensigns and Arms of the Empire; from which Time the Soldiers remain'd in a perfect Quietness and Obedience. But he liv'd not long to enjoy the Benefit of this happy Choice; for in the beginning of the following Year, near three Months after, he was feiz'd with a violent Passion against a Senator call'd Regulus, and by straining his Voice, was put into such Disorder, that by Reason of the Feebleness of his Body, and the Lowness of his Spirits, he fell into a Fever, and shortly after dy'd. This hapned in the Year 98, on the 21st or 27th Day of January, he being near 66 Years of Age; after a short Reign of one Year, four Months, and about eight or nine Days. He was deify'd by the Senate, according to the ancient Custom, and his Body inter'd in the Sepurchie of Augustus, and adjust of all the pri of line

A. D. 98. TRA-TAN,

I. Upon the Death of Nerva, Trajan, was joyfully receiv'd at Rome by the Senate and People, and obey'd as Emperor. He was a Spaniard by Birth, and about 42 Years teenth Ro- of Age, of a strong Body, and vigorous Mind, happily man Em- temper'd with the enlivening Warmth of Youth, and the pris yanza I ip soult gove about more sait tonwaty

wary Experience of old Age; so that he was in all Re- Dion, &c. spects prepar'd for the greatest Attempts, and the noblest Enterprizes. In the Beginning of his Reign, he was bleft with the Happiness of having the greatest Master of his Age, that admirable Philosopher and Biographer Plutarch, by whose wise Instructions, added to his own Abilities, he pursu'd his Ministration of the Government with that Moderation and Justice, and that Wisdom and Greatness, as rais'd both the Love and Admiration of all Men. He began with a Reformation of feveral Laws, and took care to advance the most worthy and virtuous Men to the highelt Polts, reclaiming such as were otherwise with Gentleness and Clemency. At his first Entrance into the Senate he solemnly swore, That no good Man by his Command shou'd suffer Death or Disgrace; and soon after shew'd great Liberality to worthy Men, especially relieving the Poor and Indigent, in which he both imitated and excell'd his Predecessor Nerva; which he eminently shew'd by his edu cating great Numbers of poor Mens Children in Rome, and in all Italy. He acted all Things with a remarkable Mixture of Moderation and Munificence, treated all Men with Courtesie and Affability, without Disguise or Envy, and entertain'd Persons of Merit with a most open Familiarity, tho' of mean Rank, frequently paying Visits to them, and admitting them into his private Conversation: For which being blam'd for too great Condescention, he reply'd, That he treated his Subjects with the same Usage as he himself wou'd defire of his Prince, were he a private Person. Then he had fo great an Assurance of his own Innocence and Integrity, that in giving his Sword to Saburinus, according to Custom, when he made him Commander of his Guards, he pronounc'd these Words, Take this Sword, and if I govern like a just Prince, employ it in my Service; but if I abuse my Authority, draw it against me. In short, he was endu'd with all the Excellencies and Qualifications of a mighty Emperor, and with fo great a Measure of the nobleit Gifts that Aur. Victor. tells us, he seem'd to enjoy a transcendent Temperature of all Virtues. His Virtues were all human, and he met with all human Rewards, both in the Prosperity of his Life, and his Fame after Death; it being a Cuflom in fucceeding Reigns, when the Romans pourd out their Bleffings upon their new chosen Emperors, they wish'd them The Fortune of Augustus, and the Goodness of Trajan. Yet he must be acknowledg'd to have been exorbitant in his Ambition, the prevailing Paffion of his Religion, and that Age; and not free from those two Vices of Luxury and Wo-C 4 men;

men; tho' in the former he never shew'd any Diforder or Extravagance, nor in the latter us'd any Violence or Com-

pulsion.

But none of the least remarkable Qualities of this Empefor was his Superstition and his Zeal for Paganism, the establish'd Religion of the Empire; for which he is highly applauded by Pliny, who fays, That he gloried in being the most religious of all Princes. This false Religion he embrac'd afterwards prov'd very incommodious to the true one; and the famous St. Clement of Rome found the Effects of it in the first Year of his Reign, according to Metapbrastes, who assures us, That St. Clement having converted a noble Lady call'd Theodora, and many others in Rome, the Emperor banish'd him, and condemn'd him to dig in the Mines in the Taurica Chersonesis, where in the midit of his great Afflictions he made many Converts, and spread Christianity farther than ever. But having no better Authority than Metaphrastes, we shall neither insist upon the Truth of the Fact, nor enlarge upon the Story as we might have done.

A. D. 99. Traj.2. Dion.

In the following Year the Emperor was made Pontifex Maximus, an Office highly agreeable to his Temper, and vigorously proceeded in a farther Reformation of the Laws. and all Kinds of Inconveniencies: Among the rest heutterly exterminated those insufferable Vermin the Delators, Promoters, and Pettifoggers, who in former Reigns had made valt Advantages by fomenting all Kinds of private Quarrels and Diffentions, and had been almost destroy'd by the Emperor Titus. He also put down the ordinary Pantamimi, Farce-Players and Buffoons, rightly judging those Diversions effeminate, and unworthy of the Roman Gravity. He augmented the Number of the poor Children to be educated at his Charge, to near five thousand, and perform'd many other worthy Actions : for which he not only obtain'd the Title of Pater Patrie, but the Senate gave him the new Title of OPTIMUS, as the best of all Princes, which he efteem'd more than all the Glories of his Victories and Conquests, because this related not so much to his Courage and Conduct, as to his Morality and Picty. 188 () 10 16 and 1

Enfeb. a Clem,

In the mean Time, the Apostle John proceeded in his Duty with all imaginable Care and Tenderness, and with all the Labour and Vigour that his great Age wou'd permit. Of which we have this remarkable and undoubted Instance: Coming to a City near Ephelw, in the Visitation

of his Churches, which some think to be Smyrna, heespied a Youth of excellent Shape and pregnant Parts, and taking hold of him, deliver'd him to the Bishop of the Place with this Charge twice repeated, I commend this Person to be look'd to with the utmost Care and Diligence, and that in the Presence of Christ, and the Church. The Bishop readily undertook the Charge, receiv'd the young Man into his House, instructed him, and at last baptiz'd him. After which, as if this Sacrament wou'd guard him from all Temptations, he thought he might remit the Strictness of his Care; but the young Man, making a wrong Use of his Liberty, fell into dangerous Company, by whose Arts and Snares he was feduc'd into all Kinds of Riot and Wickedness; till desparing of Pardon from God, he let loofe the Reins to the utmost Exorbitancy, and agreeing with his Affociates, they combin'd themselves into a Band of Highway Men, and made him their Captain, who foon became as far above the rest in Fierceness and Cruelty, as he was in Power and Authority. St. John upon Occasion returning to the same Place not long after, after he had dispatch'd his other Business, requir'd from the Bishop the Treasure committed to his Charge; who being surprized, and not understanding his Meaning, the Apostle reply'd, He requir'd the young Man his Brother, whose Soul be had trusted to his Care. The old Man with a forrowful Countenance, and Tears in Eves, answer'd, He is Dead: And being demanded by what kind of Death, reply'd, He's dead to God; for, alas, he is become a Villain, and instead of the Church, is fled with his Companions to the Mountains to be a Thief and a Robber. The Apostle rending his Cloaths, and bewailing that he had entrusted his Brother's Soul to fo careless a Guardian, immediately call'd for a Horse and a Guide, and hastned to the Mountains; where being taken by the Sentinels of the Robbers, he beg'd to be brought before their Captain, who stood ready arm'd some Distance. off: but as foon as he perceiv'd it was the Apostle, he became confounded, and fled away. St. John not regarding his own Age and Weakness, follow'd with all possible Speed; and when his Legs cou'd not reach him, he fent these passionate Exclamations after him, Why, 0 my Son, dost thou slie from thy aged and unarm'd Father? Take Pity on me, and fear not, there is yet Hope of Salvation for thee; I will undertake with Christ for thee; if need require, I will freely dye for thee, as our Lord did for us all, and lay down my own Life to ranfom thine; only stay and believe me, for I

am sent by Christ. Upon which he staid, and with a dejected Look throwing away his Arms, he trembled and melted into Tears; he embrac'd the aged Apostle with all possible Expressions of Sorrow, being as it were again baptiz'd with the Flood from his Eyes. St. John assur'd him, That he had obtain'd his Pardon of Christ, and having fasted and pray'd with him, and for him, and with the Arts of Consolation refresh'd his shatter'd and disconsolate Mind, he brought him into, and restor'd him to the Church; leaving a noble Example of true Love and Compassion for erring and endanger'd Souls.

The THIRD GENERAL PERSECUTION.

A. D.
100.
Traj.3.
Enseb.

The Church of God had enjoy'd Rest from Perfecution but four Years, before a new Storm broke out, and fell upon the Christians in many Parts of the Empire; which is call'd The third General Persecution of the Church. beginning in the third Year of Trajan, and about five Years after the Beginning of the fecond under Domitian. Many Things contributed to this Persecution, as the standing Laws of the Empire, the Emperor's Zeal for his Religion, and Aversion to Christianity, and the Pagans unreasonable Prejudices, which were supported with all imaginable Falfities and Calumnies against the Christians. This Emperor had iffu'd out no Edict or Decree against the Christian Religion in particular; wherefore he is not plac'd in the Number of the Persecutors by Tertulian, St. Melito, or Lactantime. But had always forbidden the Heteria, the Societies or Colleges erected in many Parts of the Empire, where Men were wont to meet, and liberally feast, under Pretext of Business, and the Maintenance of mutual Love and Friendship; which yet the Roman State beheld with a jealous Eye, as being often the Nurseries of Faction and Sedition. In the Number of which Heteria all Colleges and Corporations were accounted, that were not fetled by the Constitution of the Emperor, or by Decree of the Senare: and the Persons frequenting them adjudg'd guilty of High-Treason. Under this plausible Pretence, and the Name of illegal Societies, the Christians were severely profecuted by Governors and other Officers; in which Persecution great Numbers fell by the Rage of popular Tumults, as well as by Laws and Processes. This Persecution continu'd several Years, with different Degrees of Severity, \$50 L

verity, in many Parts of the Empire; and was so much the more afflicting, because the Christians generally suffer'd under the Notion of Malesactors and Traytors, and under an Emperor sam'd throughout the World for his singular Ju-

Itice and Moderation.

NAME OF

Of the Martyrs that fuffer'd in the Beginning of this Perfecution, we have the Names of Cefairus, a Deacon of Terracina in Italy, and Zosimus of Pisidia in Asia; the latter on the 19th Day of June; and the former on the 1st of November. But the most noted Martyr that suffer'd this Year, was St. Clement himself, who having in the Time of his Exile made great Numbers of Converts was fingled out for a special Example, and condemn'd to be thrown into the Sea with an Anchor about his Neck, according to the most receiv'd Opinion; tho' for want of more ancient Authority, many doubt of the Relation. His Martyrdom hapned on the 24th Day of November, according to Baronius, and the ordinary Roman Computation, after he had been sole Bishop of Rome nine Years, six Months, and so many Days. He was succeeded in that Dignity by Evaristus a Grecian by Birth, and of Jewish Parentage, according to Platina, who held the Place near nine Years. As to the Writings of this Apostolical Man St. Clement, besides the celebrated Epistle, of which we have formerly given some Account, there is a Fragment of a second Epistle, or rather a Homily, containing a ferious Exhortation to the Practice of Repentance, and of divers Christian Virtues on the Account of the Mercy of God, and Reward promis'd to the Faithful. Some think this Epistle more ancient than the other, as shewing no Footsteps of troublesome and unquiet Times; yet many have judg'd it a spurious Piece. Nevertheless several of the Fathers have cited both the Epiftles as of equal Authority; tho' few or none have thought them of equal Value. Several other Writings are fallly imputed to St. Clement, as particularly The Apostolical Constitutions, an ancient and useful Book, but writ long after his Death; The Recognitions, an ancient Book, abounding with Errors and Fables; The Clementine, and the Conferences of St. Peter and Appion, Works of the same Nature and Authority with the Recognitions.

During this Persecution, the holy Apostle St. John felt none of the Storm at Ephesus, but pursu'd his Duty in Peace, tho' extreamly weak and declining in Body. He continually urg'd his Auditors to the Duties of Love, Meekness and Tenderness to each other; and our Lord's

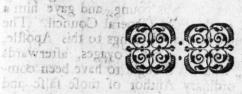
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And

great Love to him feems to have inspired his fervent Soul with a more extensive and generous Charity than the rest of Mankind. St. Jerom tells us, that by Reason of his great Age; he was reduc'd to that Weakness, that he could not go to the Church or Christian Assemblies, unless carry'd by his Disciples; and that not being able to make long Discourses, he faid nothing else in those Affemblies but this Sentence, My dear Children, love one another. those who heard him, at length being weary with his conflant Repetition of the fame Thing, faid to him, Mafter, Why do you always fay the same Thing? Upon which he return'd them this Answer, worthy of the beloved Apostle, It is what our Lord himself has commanded, and if we can perform this, we need do nothing elfe. In the latter End of this Year 100, and about the 27th Day of December, according to the most receiv'd Opinion, this great Apostle dy'd in Peace at Ephefus; being near a hundred Years of Age, and more according to fome; having many Years outhiv'd the rest of the Apostles, and done inestimable Service to the Church of God in many Parts of the World, both in the spreading of the Gospel, and the confounding of Herelies. He was bury'd at Ephefus in the City, where leveral Fathers observe, That his Tomb was then remaining in the Church, built to his Honour, and call'd by his Name; but as for those Stories concerning his sleeping in his Tomb, and the like, we think them not worthy of relating or confuting. Polycrates Bishop of Epbesus, says he wore a Plate of Gold upon his Forehead, as a Priest of Jesus Christ; which was a Badge of Honour which the first Bishops of the Church wore, in Imitation of the High-Priests among the Jews. Epiphanius afferts, That through the whole Course of his Life, he observ'd a very strict Way of Living, and worthy of him; that he never cut his Hair, nor bath'd himself, nor eat the Flesh of any Creature, and wore but one Coat, and a Linnen Garment, like his Brother James. He left many eminent Disciples behind him, the chief of whom were St. Ignatius, St. Polycarp, and Papias Bishop of Hierapolis. He is said to have appear'd to Gregory Bishop of Neocasarea, when he was young, and gave him a Creed, which is cited in the Fifth General Council. The Ebionites of old attributed several Writings to this Apostle, which they forg'd, as a Book of his Voyages, afterwards call'd St. John's Acts; which is thought to have been compos'd by Lucius, the ordinary Author of those faile and impious Books.

And thus ended the Apostolical Age, and likewise the first Century; in which Age the Church of God, which before in a great Measure was confin'd to Judea, and there also miserably debas'd and corrupted, now dilated and diffus'd it self after a most stupendous Manner; and in a Space of less than 70 Years, got Footing and Ground in the greatest and best Parts of the World: And all this by Methods uncommon and furprizing, contrary to all human Policy, and human Imagination. Christ purchas'd his Church and Kingdom with his own Blood, and his Apostles and Followers did propagate and feal it with theirs. Christianity by the Assistance and Support of twelve poor Persons, most Fishermen of a despis'd Nation, without Learning. without Forces, without Reputation or Authority in the World, in a few Years out-stretch'd the Bounds of the Roman Empire, and flew like Flashes of Lightning to the utmost Limits of the Universe. Notwithstanding it labour'd under the most conceivable Difficulties, greater than any Doctrine before; the Jews bandy'd all their Rage and Fury against it, the Philosophers us'd all their Arguments and Demonstrations, the Orators discharg'd all their Rhetorick and Eloquence, the World loaded it with all imaginable Lies and Calumnies, and the Roman Empire employ'd its Fire and Sword, and all that was terrible to defiroy it; yet no Arts could diminish its Growth, or stop its Progress. but it daily encreas'd beyond Imagination, and overbore all the Powers of Earth and Hell. Such wonderful Increase and Sublistence shews its Heavenly Nature, and Divine Original; and that nothing but the Hand of Omnipotence it felf could guide and preserve it under such furious Storms. What hapned in this Age were but Part of its Conflicts: the rest we shall relate in the following Parts of our Work, so far as we can learn them from the most ancient Records.

The End of the second Book.



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BOOK III.

From the Death of the last surviving Apostle St. John, to the first Establishment of Christianity by Human Laws, under the Emperor Constantine the Great.

Containing the Space of about 213 Tears.

CHAP. I.

From the Death of St. John, and the third General Persecution, to the last and entire Dispersion of the Jews, under the Emperor Adrian.

Containing the Space of about 36 Years.



HE Christian Religion was now A. D. spread through the greatest Parts of 101. Europe, Asia and Africa, extending Traj.4. from the British Islands to the farthest Indies; and fixing not only in Cities and populous Places, but also in Towns and Country-Villages,

as Pliny himself testifies. The Metropolitan Cities were all under Bishops of the greatest Eminency and Piety;

and the four great Cities of the Roman Empire, Rome. Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, usually stil'd Apostolical Churches, were govern'd by Apostolical Men; viz. Evaristus in Rome, Cerdo in Alexandria, Ignatius in Antioch, and Simeon in Ferusalem. Besides these, we find Publius in Athens, Polyvarp in Smyrna, Onesimus in Ephefus. Papias in Hierapolis, with many others of primitive Integrity. This was the State of the Church in the Beginning of the second Century, increasing and flourishing after a stupendous manner; but grievously afflicted on one Side by the Malice of the Jews and Pagans, and the present Persecution under this Emperor, and no less wounded on the other by the Hereticks, the Simonians, the Gnosticks, the Menandrians, the Ebionites, the Cerinthians, and the Nicolaitans: Yet still it stood firm as a Rock against all the Powers of Hell; shining and triumphing in the Glories of the utmost Purity and Piety. Among the Hereticks that infested the Church, there arose at this Time a Sect, call'd Cainites, a Branch of the Nicolaitans, fo call'd after the Name of Cain; who they faid, was form'd by a celestial and almighty Power, and Abel by one weak and inferior. They had abominable Opinions, and held that the Way to to be fav'd, was to make Trial of all manner of Things. and fatisfie their Lusts with all wicked Actions: They feign'd to themselves a great Number of Angels, to whom they gave barbarous Names, attributing to each a particular Sin; and when they were about any wicked Action, they invok'd the Angel whom they suppos'd to preside over it. They compos'd a Book called, St. Paul's Ascension to Heaven; and another, intituled, The Gospel according to St. Judas; both containing many horrid Blashemies. They had a particular Veneration for Cain, Efan, Korab, and the Sodomites; but especially for Fudas, because his Treacheries occasion'd so great a Bleffing as the Death of Fesus And transport the million of the part of Christ.

Iren.

Tert.

In the mean Time, the Emperor Train proceeded in the publick Administration with no less Wisdom than Clemen cy, and in all Things laudably, except in relation to Chiflianity. And now being excited with an eager Third witer Glory, he refolv'd to extend the Bounds of the Roman Empire by the Force of his Arms; beginning his first Enterprize against the Dacians, a barbarous People on the Northfide of the River Dambe, who had frequently motested the Romans in the Reign of Domitian. Marching with a power erful Army into those Countries, he was vigorously oppos'd

pos'd by King Decebalus, which occasion'd a very severe and bloody War: but Decebalus being no longer able to protract the War, was forc'd to a general Battel, wherein Traian by his Skill and Valour overthrew him, with exceed. ing Loss to the Dacians, and no small Slaughter to the Romans, who wanted even Linnen to bind up their Wounds. This occasion'd the Emperor out of a generous Pity to tear his own Robes and Vestments, towards the supplying that Defect; and for those who dy'd honourably, he order'd Altars to be erected, and Sacrifices to be yearly offer'd to their Memory. Trajan pursu'd his Victory with so much Diligence, that Decebalus, almost reduc'd to Despair, humbly implor'd Peace, and offer'd to accept of any Articles that the Emperor should propose; which were in a short Time confirm'd, after Decebalus had folemnly prostrated himself to the Earth, and publickly acknowledg'd himself his Victim and Vassal. This ended the first Dacian War. in the fourth Year of his Reign, for which he both obtain'd the Surname of Dacieus, and a folemn Triumph, which was attended for many Days after with all manner of publick Games and Spectacles in the City. But these publick A. D. Rejoycings did not divert the Emperor from doing of 102. Iustice, nor from the Care of the Government; for shortly Trai.s. after he proceeded to many other Regulations in the State: Particularly, he forbad all Advocates to receive Fees, or any Promise before a Cause was pleaded; and likewise restrain'd the exorbitant Expences, Bribes and other Corruptions, in the Election of Magistrates. In all which, and many other Acts of Reformation, he proceeded with the utmost Difregard to Danger, giving many fignal Instances of his fearless and open Disposition; particularly, in his great Confidence shew'd to his Friend and Favourite Sura. For some Persons, who envy'd his great Share of the Emperor's Friendship, us'd all Methods to blast his Reputation. and render him suspected to his Master; accusing him even of forming a Defign against his Life. But Trajan, to shew how much he rely'd upon the Fidelity of his Friend, having received an Invitation to Sup with him, went freely and unconcernedly; then purposely sending back all his Guards, he order'd Sura's Physician and Barber to be brought' to him, commanding the former to take off his Hair about his Eve-brows, and the latter to shave off his Beard; after which he bath'd himself, and remain'd securely among Sura's Friends and Companions. Upon this Trial he return'd to his Palace, and recounting all Circumstances, told the Accusers, Vol. II

Accusers. That if Sura had any Designs against his Life, he gave him the fairest and safest Occasion to execute them; and that his Neglect of it, was a plain Indication that no such De-

fign was ever form'd.

Another Favourite of this Emperor's was the Famous A. D. Pliny the Younger, who in the same Year that the Perse-103. Trai.6. cution began, had pronounc'd in the Senate-House a most celebrated Panegyrick upon all his Virtues and Excellencies. Dion. In Reward of which, he made him Governor of all Pontus and Bythinia, in Afia Minor, together with the City of Byzantium, not as an ordinary Proconful, but as his own Lieutenant with extraordinary Power. He arriv'd at his Government about the 17th Day of September, in the fixth Year of the Reign of Trajan; being order'd by him not only to examin into the publick Revenues and Charges, but also to write to him concerning any remarkable Accidents under his Care, and any Difficulties he should find, whether they related to Civil, or Religious Affairs. In the fame

Year the Famous Justin Martyr was born; and in the following, the golden Palace of Nero was burnt down, which 104. Orofius fays, was a Judgment for the Persecution of the

Traj.7. Christians; the Divine Justice punishing Trajan's Crime upon the Work of him who gave the first Example. In the fame Year Trajan was particularly employed in the fecond Dacian War; which was begun by Decebahus, who being unable to endure Subjection and Servitude, made all poffible Preparations against the Roman Empire. Trajan was no less vigorous on the other side; and to prosecute the War, and to shew his Power and Grandeur, he in a short Space built a Bridge over the spacious River Danabe, for the Convenience of his Forces, being all of square Stone of wonderful Beauty, and one of the most stately and magnificent Works of that Nature in the World. This Bridge confifted of twenty Piles, each 60 Foot in Thickness, and Tro in Height, besides the Foundation, which supported twenty noble Arches of 170 Foot each; so that the whole length was above 4600 Foot, a Rupendons Fabrick, confidering the thort Time of its Building, the almost insuperable Difficulties of laying fo valt a Foundation in a River extreamly deep, with an owzy Bottom, and a contracted Stream, rapid to a Miracle. This may be one Proof of the Wealth and Greatness of the Roman Empire, and of Trajan in particular; shewing that nothing was too bold and difficult for the Genius of that Prince to attempt and effect.

During these Preparations, the Persecution still rag'd in feveral Parts of the Empire, but especially in the Provinces of Pontus and Bythinia, where Pliny was Governor; who feeing vast Multitudes of Christians indicted by others. and preffing on of themselves to Execution, and that to punish all that acknowledg'd themselves Christians, wou'd be in a manner to lay waste his Provinces, thought it necessary to write to the Emperor himself about this Matter, to know. his Pleasure in the Case. His Letter, after the Presace, runs thus: I have never been formerly present at the Examination and Trial of Christians, and therefore know not the Nature of the Crime, how far it is punishable, and how to proceed in these Enquiries. Nor was I a little at a loss, whether regard ought to be had to Difference of Age; whether the Weak and Young were to be distinguish'd from the more Strong and Aged; whether place were to be allow'd for Repentance, and whether it might be of any Advantage to him, who once was a Christian, to cease to be so; whether the Name alone without other Crimes, or the Crimes that attend the Name, ought to be punish'd? In the mean time. I have us'd this Method with such as have been brought before me as Christians: I first demanded of them, whether they were Christians? Upon Confession, I repeated the Question, threatning Punishment; and if they perfifted, I commanded them to be executed. For I did not at all doubt, but that, whatever their Profession was, their Stubborness and inflexible Obstinacy ought to be punish'd. Others who were guilty of the same Madness, because they were Roman Citizens, I adjude'd to be transmitted to Rome. While Things thus proceeded, the Error, as is usual, spreading farther, more Cases did occurr: A nameless Libel was presented, containing the Names of many. But these denying themselves eper to have been Christians, when after my Example they had invocated the Gods, and offer'd Wine and Incense to your Statue, which for that Purpose I commanded to be brought with the Images of the Gods; and had likewise blasphem'd Christ, (which 'tis faid, no true Christian can be compell'd to do) I dismiss'd them. Others mention'd in the Libel confess'd themselves Christians, but immediately deny'd it; that they bad indeed been such, but that they had renounc'd it; some three Years since, others many Years, and one twenty five Years: All which paid their Reverence to your Statue and the Images of the Gods, and blasphem'd Christ. They affirm'd, that the whole Sum of that Sect or Error lay in this, that they were wont upon a set solemn Day to meet together before Sun-rise,

and to fing among themselves a Hymn to Christ, AS A GOD. and oblige themselves by a Sacrament, not to commit any Wickedness, but to abstain from Theft, Robbery, Adultery, to keep Faith, and to restore any Pledge intrusted with them; and that after that they retired, and met again at a common Meal, in which was nothing extraordinary, nor criminal: Which Meetings they have laid afide, after I had publish'd an Edict. forbidding, according to your Order, all Heteriæ, or unlawful Assemblies. To satisfy my self in the Truth of this, I commanded two Maidens called Deaconesses, to be examined upon the Rack; but I perceiv'd nothing but a lewd and immoderate Superstition, and therefore surceasing any farther Process, I have fent to beg your Advice. For the Cafe feem'd to me worthy of Consultation, especially considering the great Numbers in danger: For very many of all Ranks, Ages and Sexes are and will be call'd in question; the Contagion of this Superstition having overspread not only Cities, but Towns and Country-Villages, which yet seems possible to be stopt and cared. It is very evident that the Temples, which were almost left desolate, begin now to be frequented, that the boly Solemnities long neglected are now revived, and that Sacrifices are from all Parts brought to be fold, which hitherto found but few to purchase them. Whence the case to conjecture, what Multitudes of Persons might be reclaim'd, if place be allow'd for Repen-

By this Letter we may eafily discover the Malice of the Pagans, as well as the Innocency of the Christians; and by this Account we also find, that tho' the Severity of the Persecution might tempt some to apostatize, yet so was the Number of the Christians in those Parts, that this Great Man knew not how to deal with them. To direct him therefore in this Affair, the Emperor Trajan return'd this following Rescript. As to the Manner of your Procedure my Secundus, in examining the Causes of those who have been brought before you for being Christians, you have taken the Course which you ought to take: For no certain and general Law can be so form'd, as shall provide for all particular Gases. Let them not be fought for, but if they be accused and convicted, let them be punish'd: Yet fo, that if any denies bimfelf to be a Christian, and gives evidence of it by facrificing to our Gods, tho' beretofore be has been Suspected, let him be pardon'd upon his Repentance. But as for Libels publiffe'd without the Authors Names, let them not be valid as to the Crimes they charge; for that were an ill Precedent, and contrary to the Usage of our Reign. Tertullian, speaking of this Imperio

rial Edict, calls it, 'A Sentence confounded by a strange Necessity: It allows them not to be sought for, as if they were innocent, and yet commands them to be punish'd, as if they were guilty: It spares and rages, dissembles, and yet punishes. Why does he entangle himself in his own 'Censure? If he condemns them, why does he not hunt them out? If he thinks they ought not to be fearch'd out, "why does he not acquit them? Here Tertullian is observ'd to argue more like an Orator, than a Logician: For Trajan might be unwilling the Christians shou'd be nicely hunted out, and yet not think them innocent: He cou'd not find them guilty of any enormous Crime, but only of a novel Superflition; and therefore, while they conceal'd themselves, did not think it reasonable that they shou'd be left to the Malice and Rapine of busie Under-Officers. But however it was, the Keeness of their Enemies Fury by this means was taken off; and tho' the Popular Rage might in some particular Places still continue, yet the general Force and Rigour of the Persecution did abate and cease.

In the mean Time Trajan, pursuing new Glories, continu'd his Dacian Expedition with great Vigour, shewing himfelf a most expert and valiant Commander; and notwith- Trai.8. standing the Country was large and wild, and the Inhabi-Dion, tants fierce and hardy, he totally subdued the whole, difcover'd much Treasure, and reduc'd King Decebalus to such Extremities, that to escape falling into the Romans Hands.

he flew himfelf. His Head was immediately fent to Rome, and the whole Country of Dacia was added to the Roman Empire, and reduc'd into a regular Province; in which Country Trajan built many Cities and Towns, and fent feveral Colonies, being now in the eighth Year of his Reign. After which he return'd to Rome with great Honour and Renown, and enter'd the City a second Time in solemn Triumph, which was succeeded with infinite Variety of Shews and Games, with many magnificent Feafts and Entertainments, for Joy of his Return and Victories. Thefe were more pumpous than any before this Time, continuing

123 Days successively; in which sometimes ren thousand Beafts, both wild and tame, were encounter'd and flain in a Day; accompany'd with a vast Number of Gladiators Prizes, and other Paganish and superstitious Costoms. The Name and Generolity of this Emperor became to celebrated through the World, that at this Time Ambanadors from the very Indier, and several distant Nations came to

fue for his Alliance, acknowledging him to be their Lord and

438 Cent. II. Ecclesiastical History. Book III.

A. D. and Superior. Fired with these Honours, and thirsting af106. ter new Conquests, he resolv'd upon an Expedition into
Traj.o. the East, against the Armenians and Parthians; taking Occasion from the King of Armenia's receiving his Crown
from the Hands of the King of Parthia, and acknowledging him his Superior; whereas that King ought to have receiv'd his Authority from Rome, according to former Articles. Having made all due Preparations, he parted from
Italy in October, in the 9th Year of his Reign; and passing
through Athens, and the Lesser Asia, arriv'd at Seleucia, near

Antioch in Syria, towards the End of December.

About this Time flourish'd Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, and one of St. John's Disciples; a Person sufficiently noted for his Writings and Opinions. He wrote five Books, intituled, The Explications of our Lord's Discourses; but at present we have only some few Fragments of them in the Works of other Authors. He was the chief that promoted the famous Opinion concerning the temporal Reign of Fefus Christ, which they suppos'd shou'd happen on Earth a thousand Years before the Day of Judgment, when the Elect shou'd be gather'd together, after the Resurrection, in the City of Jerusalem, and then during that Space shou'd. enjoy all the Delights imaginable. This Opinion was much in Esteem for two or three Centuries, the Followers of it being term'd Millenarians and Chiliastes; and it was not only held by the Hereticks, as the Cerinthians, and Marcionites, the Montanists, the Meletians, and Apollinarians, but also by many of the Catholicks and Martyrs, as Papias, Fu-Stin Martyr, Irenaus, Nepos, Victorinus, Lactantius, and Sulpicius Severus. So that St. Ferom durst not absolutely con-demn the Opinion; but left it to the Determination of God himself. That which gave most Credit to it was its being embrac'd by Papias, who being a Disciple of St. John, was fuppos'd best to know his Mind, as to the thousand Years he mentions in his Revelation; but Eusebius and some others have thought him a credulous Man, and of mean Judgment in interpreting the Scripture, and therefore not much to be tely'd on.

Upon Thursday the 7th of January, the Emperor Trajan arriv'd at Antioch, and enter'd that great City with the Pomps and Solemnities of a Triumph; and as his first Care was usually about the Concerns of Religion, he began immediately to enquire into that Affair. He look'd upon it as an Affront to his other Victories to be conquer'd by Christians, and therefore began to revive his Inquisitions against them.

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A. D. 107. Traj. 10.

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Whereupon the brave Champion Ignatius, being in Fear for the Church of Antioch his Charge, to protect that, fearlefly presented himself before the Emperor, between whom there pass'd a particular formal Discourse, Trajan admiring That he dared to transgress his Laws, while the good Man afferted his own Innocency and the Power which God had given them over evil Spirits, and that the Gods of the Gentiles were no better than Demons, there being but one supreme Deity, who made the World, and his only begotten Son Jesus Christ, who the crucify'd under Pilate, had yet destroy'd him that had the Power of Sin, that is, the Devil, and wou'd ruin the whole Power and Empire of the Damons, and tread it under the Feet of those who carry'd God in their Hearts. The Issue of the Discourse was, that he was cast into Prison, where, as some report, he was subjected to the most severe and merciles Torments, scourg'd with Plumbata, oblig'd to hold Fire in his Hands, while his Sides were burnt with Papers dipt in Oil, his Feet stood upon live Coals, and his Flesh was torn with burning Pincers. Having conquer'd all Torments, the Emperor pronounc'd the final Sentence upon him, That being incurably over-run with Superstition, he shou'd be carry'd bound by Soldiers to Rome, and there thrown as a Prey to the Wild-Beasts. The pious Martyr heartily rejoic'd at the fatal Decree, I thank thee, O Lord, cry'd he, that thou hast condescended thus perfectly to honour me with thy Love, and hast thought me worthy with thy Apo-Itle Paul to be bound with Iron Chains. With that he chearfully embrac'd his Chains, and having fervently pray'd for his Church, and with Tears recommended it to the divine Care and Providence, he deliver'd up himself into the Hands of his Keepers, ten Soldiers who were appointed to transport him to the Place of Execution.

Being accompany'd by two eminent Christians call'd Philo and Agathopus, he was conducted on Foot to Selencia, the Place where St. Paul and Barnabas set sail for Cyprus; where going on board, after a tedious Voyage, they arriv'd at Smyrna, and there landing, he went to salute Polycarp Bishop of the Place, his old Fellow-Pupil under the Apostle St. John. Joyful was the Meeting of these two holy Men, Polycarp being so far from being discourag'd, that he rejoic'd in the other's Chains, and earnestly press'd him to a firm and final Perseverance. All the Country also repair'd to this City, especially the Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons of the Asian Churches, to behold so venerable a Sight, to partake of the holy Martyr's Prayers and Benediction, and

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to encourage him to hold on to his Consummation. To requite whole Kindness, and for their farther Instruction and Establishment in the Faith, he wrote four Epistles from this City to four several Churches: The first to the Ephesians, wherein he tellify'd his Joy in seeing Onesimus their Bi-" thop, exhorting them to live in perfect Unity, and in Obedience to their Bishop and Presbyters, and declaring the 'Disobedient to be out of the Church, and depriv'd of the celestial Food. Next he warn'd them of Heresies, urging ' their Belief of the Divinity and Incarnation of Jesus Christ; and after that exhorted them to pray for all Conditions of "Men, frequently to affemble together, and inviolably to 'preserve Faith and Charity; affirming that the Devil was ignorant of the Virginity of Mary, of her Child-birth, and of the Death of our Lord; and concluding all with beg-'ging their Prayers for him and the Church of Syria. He wrote his second Epistle to the Magnesians, whose City stood upon the River Meander, 'exhorting them to be obedient to their Bishop Damas, to do nothing without 'him, and to live in Unity; admonishing them to beware of vain Opinions, not to live like Jews but Christians, to believe in Jesus Christ, the Word of God not pro-ceeding from Silence, but sent from God the Father, and our only Hope. At last he desir'd them to remember ' him in their Prayers. He wrote his third Epistle to the Trallians by Polybius their Bishop, ' wherein he commended their Union and Submission to their Bishop, Presbyters and Deacons, exhorting them to Perseverance in this U-'nion, and to avoid Hereticks. Then he expounded the 'Orthodox Principles of the Catholick Church, that Jesus 'Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, that he was really Man, that he actually fuffer'd and dy'd, and not in Ap-' pearance, as some Hereticks affirm'd. The last Epistle that he wrote from this City Smyrna was to the Romans, whither he was going, ' in which he gave them an Account of ' his present State and Condition, expressing a most noble ' Zeal, and fervent Defire of fuffering Martyrdom for his dear Lord, befeeching them not to take his glorious Crown from him, by any Ways preventing his being ex-His Keepers a little impatient of their Stay at Smyrna, fee fail for Troos; where at his Arrival in the Month of September, he was not a little refresh'd with the News he receiv'd of the Persecution ceasing in the Church of Antioch, according to his constant Prayers to God. Hither several

Churches fent their Messengers to visit and salute him, and hence he dispatch'd three Epistles more: The first was wrote to the Philadelphians, 'congratulating their Union, exhorting them to avoid corrupt Doctrines, and advising them not to follow the Abettors of Schisms and Divisions, and to concur in every Thing with their Bishop. Lastly, he resuted the Arguments of such as wou'd believe nothing but what was written in the Old Testament, declaring that the Gospel was the Perfection of what was prefigur'd in the old Law. His fecond Epistle was wrote to the Smyrnaans, from whom he had lately departed, which he fent with the former by Burrhus the Deacon, whom they and the Ephesians had fent to wait upon him. In this, he confuted the Error of those who deny'd the Humanity of Jesus, and that he assum'd a real Body; admonishing the Smyrneans to avoid Divisions, as the Original of all Evil, to obey their Bishop, to honour the Presbyters and Deacons, and to do nothing contrary to the Precepts of their Bishop, without whose Allowance, it was not lawful even to baptize, or to celebrate their Agapa or Love-Feasts. His last Epistle was a private Letter only to Polycarp, 'in which he gave him many excellent Rules and Instructions to behave himself as a Bishop and Head of the Church, to be continually vigilant and charitable, tender and affable, not despising the meanest Persons alive. Lastly, he advis'd him to call a Synod, and to ordain a Bishop to be sent into Syria, where God had given Peace to the Church. Shortly after, from Troas they fail'd to Neapolis in Macedonia. thence to Philippi, where they were entertain'd by the Christians of that Church with all imaginable Courtesie, and conducted forwards in their Journey. Hence they pass'd on Foot through Macedonia and Epirus, 'till they came to Epirus damnum, a City of Dalmatia; where again taking Ship, they fail'd through the Adriatick Sea, and arriv'd at Rhegium in Italy; whence they directed their Course to Puteoli, Ignatius desiring, if it might have been granted, thence to have gone by Land, that he might have trac'd the same Way, by which St. Paul went to Rome. After a short Stay at Puteoli, a prosperous Wind soon carry'd them to the Roman Port at the Mouth of the Tiber, a few Miles from Rome. whither the holy Martyr long'd to arrive, as much defiring to be at the End of his Race, as his wearied Keepers were to be at the End of their Journey.

The Christians at Rome daily expecting his Arrival, were Aa. come out to meet him, and accordingly receiv'd him with Ignat.

conal Sentiments of Joy and Sorrow; glad at the Approach of fo great and good a Man, but forry at his defign'd Execution. But when some of them did but intimate, That possibly the People might be taken off from desiring his Death. he express'd a pious Indignation, entreating them, To cast no Rubs in his Way, nor give the least Hindrance to him, now be was hastning to his Crown. Being conducted to Rome. he was presented to the Presect of the City; and while Preparations were making for his Martyrdom, he and the other Christians improv'd their Time to the most pious Purposes: He pray'd with them and for them, heartily recommended the State of the Church to the Protection of our bleffed Saviour, and earnestly solicited Heaven, To stop the Persecution that was begun, and bless the Christians with a true Love and Charity towards one another. That the Punishment might be more pompous and publick, one of their solemn Festivals, the Time of their Saturnalia, was pitch'd upon for his Execution; at which Times they usually entertain'd the People with the bloody Conflicts of the Gladiators, and the encountring of Wild Beafts. Accordingly on the 20th Day of December, he was brought out into the Amphitheatre, and agreeably to his own Defire, that he might have no Grave but the Bellies of Wild Beafts, the Lions were let loofe upon him, whose roaring Allarm he entertain'd with no other Concern, than with faving, That now as God's own Corn be sou'd be ground between the Teeth of these Beasts, and become pure Bread for his heavenly Master. Thus dy'd the great Ignatius, at a great Age, after he had been fole Bishop of Antioch about 37 Years; being fucceeded by Heron, an eminent Person, who afterwards imitated him in laying down his Life for his Flock. remaining Bones of St. Ignatius were taken up by those who were Companions in his Journey, who transported them to Antioch, where they were joyfully receiv'd, and honourably entomb'd in the Coemetery without the Gate that leads to Daphne. These have left us a particular Account of this holy Man's Martyrdom, and farther affure us, that the following Night, after they had pray'd to Heaven for Comfort and Assurance, falling into a Slumber, some of them faw this Martyr standing by them and embracing them; others beheld him, as it were Sweating, and just coming from his great Labour, and standing by God with much Affurance, and unspeakable Glory. As to St. Ignatius's Epistles, besides the seven we have mention'd, eight others have been attributed to him, which all learned Men look look upon as spurious; but for the Genuiness of the former. which have occasion'd so many modern Disputes, we must refer all doubtful Persons to Bishop Pearson, Cotelerius, Du Pin, Ruinart, and Dr. Wake, who have folidly answer'd all the Objections of Salmafins, Blondel, and Daille.

This Year was not only memorable for the Martyrdom Engel. of St. Ignatius, but also for that of another great Man. Simeon Bishop of Ferusalem, commonly call'd The Brother of our Lord; occasion'd principally by the Jealousies of the Roman Emperors against the Line of David, and the Blood Royal of the House of Israel, which both Vespasian and Domitian had endeavour'd to extirpate. This was a fufficient Pretence to take off this aged Bishop; for some of the Sects of the Jews, not able to bear his powerful Zeal in the Cause of his Religion, and finding no other Crime, accus'd him to Atticus, at that Time Consular Legat of Syria, for being of the Posterity of the Kings of Judah, and withal a Christian. Whereupon he was apprehended and brought before the Proconful, who commanded him for several Days together to be rack'd with the most exquisite Torments; all which he sustain'd with such a compos'd Mind, and invincible Patience, that the Proconful and all present were amaz'd to see a Person so extreamly aged endure fuch Tortures. At length he was commanded to fuffer the same Punishment with his Cousin German according to the Flesh, our blessed Lord; being crucify'd in the 120th Year of his Age, having been Bishop of Ferusalem about 45 Years, from the Death of his Brother St. James: A longer Proportion of Time than twelve of his immediate Successors could make up; God probably lengthning the Life of this Apostolical Man, that as a skilful Pilot he might steer the Affairs of the Church in those dismal stormy Days. The Latines keep his Feast on the 18th Day of February, and the Greeks on the 27th of April: And Eusebins intimates not only that he kept the Church of Ferufalem from Herefies, but also that his Death concluded the Apostolical Age; or at least of such as were so happy as to be taught by the immediate Mouth of Fesas Christ.

. About the Time of the Death of St. Ignatius, the A. D. holy Polycarp made a Collection of his feven Epiftles, and before he had heard the Manner and Particulars of his Traj. Martyrdom, at the Request of the Philippians, he sent them to that Church, prefixing an excellent Epistle of his own, and highly valu'd by all the Ancients. In this Epiftle he

first congratulated the Philippians for receiving the imprison'd Saints as they ought, as Ignatius, Zosimus and Rufus, whose Chains were the Crowns of God's Elect. Then he extoll'd their Piety, exhorting them to preserve and encrease it more and more, about which he gave many excellent Instructions; and farther taught them the Reality of our Saviour's Incarnation and Death, condemning those who disbeliev'd the Resurrection and future Judgment as the First-born of Satan. But to shew his Modesty and Humility, he told them, That he took nor the Liberty to write to them concerning Righteousness, but by their own Incitement; for he cou'd not pretend to come up to the Wisdom of the blessed St. Paul, who had already been with them, and taught them; confessing that he wanted a perfect Knowledge of several Things in the Holy Scriptures. He shew'd much Concern for the Fall of Valens, one of their Presbyters, and also his Wife, being occasion'd by Avarice; exhorting them nevertheless to pardon them, and to endeavour to re-unite those stray'd Members to the Body of the Church. At the End of the Epistle he desir'd to know a certain Account of Ignatius and his Companions; which shews the exact Time of writing this Epistle, which he sent by a Christian call'd Crescens: This Epistle seems to have a great Resemblance both in Stile and Substance with St. Clement's Epistle to the Corinthians, often suggesting the same Rules, and using the same Words and Phrases; so that it is not to be doubted but at the writing of it he had that excellent Epittle in his Eye. In fum, it is a pious and truly Christian Epistle, furnish'd with short and admirable Precepts and Rules of Life, and penn'd with the Modelly and Simplicity of the Apostolick Times, and was esteem'd by the Ancients next to the Writings of the holy Canon; and St. Ferom tells us, that even in his Time, this Epiffle, as well as St. Clement's, was read in the publick Affemblies of the Asian Church. It was written in the Beginning of the Year 108, in which Year St. Clement's Successor Evarifius, Bishop of Rome, dy'd, and as some say, was martyr'd, after he had held this Dignity about eight Years; being fue ceeded by Alexander I. a Roman by Birth, and the fifth Bi thop of Rome after St. Peter and St. Paul, who continu'd in the Chair about ten Years. In the fame Year dy'd Cerdo Bishop of Alexandria, after eleven Years Continuance in that Office, and was succeeded by Primus, or Aprimus, the fourth Billiop of this City after St. Mark, who continu'd about ten Years.

In the mean Time, the Emperor Trajan with wonderful Dion. Honour and Success pursu'd the Course of his Victories and Conquests in the East. Having the last Year subdu'd all the Kingdom of Armenia, and reduc'd the whole Country into a Province of the Empire; he this Year march'd forwards with his powerful Troops, and first conquering the Dominions of the King of Parthia, he then enter a that opulent Country of Mesopotamia, where he took the City of Nifibis, and other Places, and reduc'd that Kingdom, as he had Armenia and Parthia, to be a Province of the Empire. In all which the King of Parthia was constrain'd to submit, after many Skirmishes, Encounters, Attacks, Sieges, and a thousand noble Acts perform'd by this Emperor; wherein he not only shew'd himself a Person of amazing Courage and Industry, but likewise of no less Conduct and Discipline. The Fame of his mighty Victor ries daily fill'd the Ears of the World, as well as of the Senate and People of Rome, who order'd great Sacrifices and Thanksgivings to their Gods, and conferr'd new Honours and Titles upon their Emperor, particularly the Surnames of Armenicus and Parthicus, before he return'd to the City. But the Time of his Return is not very certain.

For four succeeding Years we find nothing concerning A. D. the Actions of Trajan, and not much relating to the At- 100. fairs of the Church. But in the first of these we are told Trai. of the Martyrdom of Barsimaus Bishop of Edessa in Mesopotamia; and of that of Onesimus Bishop of Ephesius, who was ston'd to Death at Rome; as also of the Destruction of three Cities in Galatia, which were fwallow'd up by an Earthquake. This last Calamity was not long after fue- A. D. ceeded by another in Rome, the burning of the Pantheon 110. by Lightning; accounted a great Misfortune by the Citi- Traj. zens. About which Time Saturninus or Saturnillus of An- 13. tioch began to broach his Herefies in several Parts of Syria, Epiph. and to propagate the Errors and Impieties of Simon Magus Tortal and his Master Menander, adding some others of his own: He affirm'd that the World and Men were made by Angels, some of whom were naturally good, and others naturally evil; That the God of the Jews was one of the bad Angels, to destroy whom Christ assum'd a fantastical or fallacious Body. He deny'd the Resurrection of the Body and faid that Marriage was inflituted by ill Angels; and by his Austerity of Life, and Abstinence from eating of Animals, he imposid upon great Numbers. About a Year or two after him, another Disciple of Menander's, call'd Basilides, A. D. broach'd his Herefies in Alexandria, and in a short Time 111.

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A. D. infected the greatest Part of Egypt, becoming himself one 112. of the Heads of the Gnostick Crew, which so far prevail'd, Traj. that this Century is by many call'd Seculum Gnosticum.

14.

This Person enlarg'd upon the Inventions of former Hereticks, and vented the most monstrous and fabrilous Fictions: He imagined a ridiculous Series of Gods proceeding from one another, and from them Angels, who created each a Heaven; making the Number of those Heavens to amount to 365, to answer the Number of the Days of the Year; adding, that the Angels of the last Heaven created the Earth and the Men that inhabit it, and that their Prince was the God of the Jews, who design'd to make all the other People subject to him. But the Father, who he said was never born, and had no Name, fent his Son to hinder this Injustice; which Son appear'd in the Shape of a Man, but was none, and the Fews put Simon the Cyrenian to Death instead of him. For this Reason he held that Men ought not to believe in Jesus Christ crucify'd, but in him that appear'd to be nail'd to the Crofs, tho' he was not fo in Reality. He deny'd the Refurrection of the Body, permitted all carnal Lufts, and made use of Images of Wax, and of all the Impieties of Magick; yet feem'd fo fevere as to Morals, that he maintain'd that God wou'd pardon no Sins but those of Ignorance; but at the same Time he allow'd of no Punishment but a Transmigration of Souls, according to Pythagoras, whom he follow'd in several Particulars. He wrote 24 Books upon the Gospel, but what Gospel we know not; and Epiphanius and St. Ferom affore us, that the Herefie of the Basilidians was not extinguish'd in their Times. The condendary through the

A. D. In the 16th Year of the Emperor Trajan's Reign, he de-113. dicated a magnificent Place in Rome for the erecting a stately Column in Honour of all his Ass; and being excited

by a new Profpect of Glories, in the following Year he A.D. undertook a fecond Expedition into the East, against the 114. Parthians and other Nations. About the Beginning of Traj. which Wars there arose a false Prophet and Impostor in 17. Palestine call'd Elxai or Elxaus, who joining himself with Epiph. the Ebianites and Nazarenes, became the Author of a new Sect, holding strange and uncertain Opinions concerning Christ. These were also call'd Offenians and Sampsaans, and were so wild and unsetled in their Notions, that they cou'd not properly be call'd either Jews or Christians, tho' in several Particulars they agreed with both. They follow'd the Jews in their Sabbath, Circumcifion, and the inferior

Ceremonies of the Law, but detelled their Sacrifices, and their.

their eating the Flesh of Animals; As to Christianity they affirm'd the Holy Ghost to be a Woman, and that Felius Christ had a human, but invisible Body 66 Miles in Height! with other fuch Follies and Extravagancies. They reject ed some Things of every Part of the Scripture, but us'd feveral Texts both out of the Old Testament and the New: but allow'd of none of St. Paul's Writings. They affirm'd it was an indifferent Thing to deny the Faith, holding that upon Necessity a wife Man shou'd abjure Christiawith his Mouth, but not with his Heart at the same Time. They also carry'd about with them a Book, which they fay fell down from Heaven; declaring that every Perfon who heard it, and believ'd it, shou'd obtain Remission of Sins: a Remission different from that which Fesus Christ bestow'd. This Sect spread it self principally in Palestine. about Forden and the Dead Sea, and there were some Re-

mainders of it till the End of the fourth Century.

In the mean Time, the Emperor Trajan proceeded in the A. D. famous Expeditions he had begun in the East; and with great Difficulty and Bravery having pass'd the great River Enphrates, couragiously advanc'd forwards, tubduing Cities and Castles in all Parts, and among the rest the great City Dien. Arbela in Affyria, where Alexander overthrew King Daring And continuing his fuccessful Progress, he conquer'd other Countries where the Roman Standards had never before been display'd; from whence without any great Opposition, he advanc'd up to the Walls of the renowned City Babylon; and taking it by Force, he also subdu'd all its Territories, by which Means he became intire Mafter of those rich and noble Countries Chaldaa and Assyria. Here he design'd to make a Cut from the River Euphrates to the Tigris, for the Conveniency of his Vessels and his Marches; but finding the former River fo much higher than the other, as to render one unnavigable, he mounted his Vessels upon Land-Carriages, and brought them to the Tigriss from whence he advanc'd to the great City Ctefiphon. which he took, and open'd himself a Passage into Persia. where he still made new Conquests, and gain'd new Dominions, to the Wonder and Terror of all Nations. After this great Success, he desir'd to repose himself for some few Days, and to pass the Winter in Syria, where dispofing his Army, he lodg'd himself in his chief City Antioch: to which Place repair'd a numerous and splendid Concourse of Kings, Potentates and Ambassadors to attend this mighty Emperor. Continuing there in all Pleasures, and furcounded by a glorious Frain of Monarche and crown'd Heads.

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Heads, his Ambition was abated by an Accident aftonifiing to the utmost Degree; a prodigious Earthquake, and the most dreadful that ever hapned in any Age of the World. It was in a manner general; but Syria and Antioch felt the greatest Share of its Fury, it beginning with arr amazing Storm and Whirlwind, which overthrew infinite Numbers of Trees and Houses, and brought down the Birds to the Earth, being succeeded by such dreadful Light nings and Tremblings, that it seem'd as tho' the World was all in Flames, and the Earth open'd to devour all hu man Kind. Many Cities in the East were ruin'd, many Hills and Mountains funk and became level, many Rivers were dry'd up, and many Waters and Fountains sprung up in new Places. In the City of Antioch almost all the Palaces and Buildings were intirely demolified, and many thousands of People flain, particularly Pedo the present Conful; and the Emperor himself was in great Danger of his Life, escaping by a sudden leaping out of a Window into the Fields, where he was constrain'd to remain for many Days in Tents. Some write that he was held in the Air by an unknown Hand for some Space; and it is believ'd by many, that these Calamities were Instances of the divine Displeasure for the Severities us'd against the Christians; and that these caus'd some Remorse in Trujan's Mind, and dispos'd him to a better Opinion of that Religion in the rest of his Reign. Besides these, we are told that Tiberianus, Governor of Palestine, fent the Emperor an Account, That he was wearied out in executing the Liams against the Galileans, who cranded to Execution in such Multitudes, that he was at a Lofs how to proceed: Upon which Trajan gave Command, That no particular Inquifition shou'd be made after the Christians, tho' if any offer'd themselves they show'd suffer. But this Account, for Want of sufficient Antiquity and Authority is doubted by several The Roman Empire did not only suffer by the Punish-

ments fent immediately from Heaven, but also by those or-fins. from Men about the same Time: For the Jewn, who had been differs'd into all Parts of the World, fellinto adread ful Rebellion in feveral Provinces of the Empire ; taking

A. D. 116. Traj.

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and afterwards from the terrible Earthquakes, which as they believ'd, portended the Ruin and Downfal of the Roman Power. Having enter'd into a dark Conspiracy, they exerted their utmost Malice, and made incredible Slaughe ters, and barbarous Massacres upon Romans and Greeks, of all Ranks and Degrees, without either Distinction or Mer-

occasion first from Trajan's distant Expeditions in the East.

cy. This Rebellion began first in Cyrene, a Roman Province in Africa, and shortly after in Ægypt, and next in the Island of Cyprus; which Places, especially the first and last, they in a manner dispeopled, so great and boundless was their obstinate Fury. Their Cruelties and Barbarities were so outrageous, that they proceeded to devour Mens Flesh, besmeared themselves with their Blood, wore their Skins, faw'd them afunder, cast them to wild Beasts, made them kill each other, and put them to all Kinds of Torments. Besides the Massacres they made in several Parts of Agypt, in the Province of Cyrene they destroy'd to the Number of 220000 Persons, and no less than 240000 in Cyprus; the former under their Commander Luchas or Andrew, and the latter under Artemion. The Emperor Trajan, still in his Eastern Expedition, finding the pernicious Effects of these Barbarities, in a great Rage resolv'd to pursue those impious Wretches throughout his Dominions, not as Enemies or Rebels, but as Creatures noxious and destructive to Human Society, with a Revenge answerable to the Vastness of their Crimes; which he speedily effected, under the Conduct of several Commanders both by Sea and Land, among whom Marcins Turbo was chief. These, after many cruel and bloody Hostilities, severely chastis'd that Obstinate and Rebellious Nation, whom God had now forfaken, leaving them to be treated as the Venom and Pells of Mankind, and to be destroy'd like Beasts in infinite Numbers, by all Kinds of Deaths; which prov'd the most terrible Execution and Punishment, that ever hapned to any Nation in the World. The furious Behaviour of the Jews in Cyrene and Cyprus, caus'd the Emperor to suspect their Brethren in Mesopotamia; and upon that order'd L. Quinting to banish all out of that Country; which was foon effected, with the additional Deaths of great Numbers by Acts of Holliffey And because the Criselties of the Jews were most notorious in Cypras, partly for the Security of the Cypriots, and partly to brand the few with perpetual Infamy, it was publickly enacted, That no Jew, the driven by Tempels, should presume to fet foot in Cyprus, upon Pain of immedia ate Execution, an already condemn'd by bis very Appearance on that Soil, which had been tainted with the deadly Venom of his Country mento bus nul

In the middle of these Calamities, Trajan still pursu'd his view Victories, and passing down the River Tigris into the Persian Gulf, enter'd the valt Oriental Ocean, entulating the Vol. II.

Actions of Alexander, and pretending to make a Conquest of the Indies. And when he was far distant from those Parts, he boalted of greater Conquests than Alexander, and fent the Names of feveral subdued Nations to the Senate, hitherto unknown to the Romans; for which he obtain'd a Triumphal-Arch, and many new additional Honours. But God thought fit before his Death a little to ecliple his Glories, and to mortifie his Ambition; for now many of his Conquelts were chang'd and revolted, and the Garrisons he had left behind, either turn'd out, or cut in pieces. However, by his great Vigour and Industry he recover'd most of them, and set a King over the Parthians. But in the following Year, and 20th of his Reign, going to beliege a Town call'd Atra, near Arabia, he met with a great Disappointment. Here he disguis'd himself, and headed a Body of Horse up to the Walls; but was repell'd with great Loss, and Danger of his Person : And, as if God himself fought against him, it thunder'd and lightned, Rainbows appear'd in the Clouds, Storms of Hail and Wind fell upon the Romans when they made their Attacks, and the Flies render'd their Provisions naufeous. So that this great Emperor was confirmin'd to refire with Dishonour, and abandon the Siege. Not long after he fell linto a Distemper, which he believ'd to be occasion'd by Poyson; and being invited Home by the Senate, who had prepar'd a solemn Triumph for him, he took his Journey towards Italy, leaving his Cousin Adrian Commander of his Army in Syria. But coming into the Province of Cilicia in the Lesser Asia, he found himself weak and declining to and his Diftemper increasing, he order dhimself to be carry'd to the City of Selencia, where within a few Days after he dy'd: A Prince of most shining Virtues, and had he not been stain'd with his Severities against the Christians, might have been esteem'd the most matchless Monarch in all the Pagan World; which afterwards occasion'd the Fable of his Soul being releas'd out of Hell by the Prayers of Pope Gregory the Great. He dy'd in the Year 117, on the 8th day of August, under the Consulships of Niger and Apronianus, being in the 63d Year of his Age, and having reign'd 19 Years, 6 Months, and 19 Days in wins

A. D.
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ADRIAN the fifteenth
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Emperor.

IV. The Emperor Trajan leaving no Issue behind him, his Death was conceal'd for a Time, till Aline Hadrianus his Mephew had sounded the Inclinations of his Army, and Trajan's Widow Platina the Nobility of Rome; and upon

upon the Discovery she produc'd a forg'd Instrument, importing, That Trajan had adopted Adrian for his Son and Successor. This Artifice so well succeeded, that the Defign took effect, and the Army immediately swore Obedience to Adrian; and in Confideration of his Abilities and Relation to Trajan, he was not long after acknowledg'd by the Senate and People of Rome. This Emperor, as well as the last, was a Spaniard by Birth, and now about 40 Years of Age; being a Person of admirable Parts and Qualifications, and scarce any Prince in the World was ever more remarkable for the Excellency, and Variety of his Endowments. He was capable of comprehending whatfoever he defired, and was highly skilful in all Exercises both of Body and Mind; wanting no Strength nor Abilities either for Arms or Learning, in which he industriously endeavour'd to excel all Men. He compos'd excellently in Profe and Verse, pleaded Causes, and became perfect in Oratory; was a fingular Mathematician, and no less skilful in Physick, knowing the Virtues and Properties of all Plants and Minerals. In Drawings and Paintings he was equal to the greatest Masters, and arriv'd at the utmost Perfection in Musick; being a munificent Encourager of all forts of Learned Men and Artifts. Besides all he had a Memory beyond Belief, and cou'd exactly retain all Places, Businesses, and Soldiers, calling them all by their Names, tho' long absent; and moreover was of fuch Capacity, that he cou'd write, indite and conferr of Bufiness all at one Instant. In fine, he fuffer'd nothing to escape his Knowledge and Curiosity; and he is faid to have been as much Master of all Arts and Sciences, as almost any single Man cou'd be of one. His extream Curiofity also led him into all Kinds of Divinations, Magick and Superstition; and as St. 7erom observes, he was admitted into almost all the Religious Mysteries of Greece. His Behaviour was extraordinary, freely conversing with Men of Reputation, tho of mean Rank, visiting them in their Sickness twice or thrice in a Day, and treating them with all the Kindness and Familiarity of Companions; and he delpis'd fuch as wou'd envy him a Pleasure so sensible to him, upon the Pretence of maintaining the Port and Grandeur of an Emperor. His Clemency appear'd in his ready pardoning all past Injuries. To that having once met a Person who had offend ed him, he faid, Tow have efcap'd, fince I am made Emperer; and afterwards, when a Servant ran madly upon apon

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him with his Sword, he took no farther Notice of the Action, than to order him a Physician to cure his Phrenfy. Yet notwithstanding all his uncommon Virtues and Qualifications, he was not free from great Vices and Imperfections; and he is observ'd to have had a strange and unusual Mixture of both, so as to seem to reconcile most Vices with their contrary Virtues. For in the midst of all his Excellencies, he was noted to be proud and vainglorious, envious and detracting, cruel and revengeful; and notwithstanding all his Favours, he bore a secret Hatred to Men of more than ordinary Ingenuity and Learning. He was inquisitive and prying into the Secrets even of the meanest Families, and was so ready to hearken to Whisperers and Sycophants, that the Estates and Lives of his greatest Friends became often endanger'd. However, he had a peculiar Faculty of commanding and governing his Affections, and by a mighty Artifice and Address cover'd over his infolent, envious, fullen and wanton Difposition, which is his to I missis to

Not long after the Death of Trajan, when the Roman Empire was in its utmost Extent above 4000 Miles in length, Adrian in a great Measure abandon'd Parthia and the other Eastern Provinces, which Trajan had conquer'd: judging Media, Mesopotamia, Parthia, and the rest of those distant Countries, to be of greater Inconvenience to the Empire, than Advantage; and for the better Security of other Places, he made Euphrates the Boundary and Barrier in those Parts, and plac'd his Legions about the Banks of that famous River. Having thus fetled the Affairs of the East, and suppress'd some Disturbances lately rais'd by the fews, he took his Journey by Land towards Italy. and fent the Ashes of Trajan by Sea. Upon his night Approach to Rome, he was inform'd, That a Magnificent Triumph was prepared for him, in the fame manner as was provided for his Uncle Trajan, as being Companion in the same Wars and Conquests. But he wholly refused that Honour, judging himself not worthy of it; and or der'd that the same Triumph and Entertainment shou'd be given to the Image of Trajen; all which was perform'd with wonderful Homp and Solemnity; And it is observ'd That he was the only Man that even triumph'd after he was dead. His Ashes were plac'd in a golden Urn, upon the lop of anoble Pillar 140 Foot high, of curious Workmanship, representing the Particulars of all his great Exploits, which remains to this Day; and besides their dei-

fying

A. D. 118. Hadri. fying him after the Roman Custom, in Honour of him, they instituted new Games call'd Parthica, which continued in Rome for many Ages. Shortly after Adrian's Entrance into Rome, he took an Oath never to punish a Senator, but by the very Sentence of the Senate; and that he might omit nothing that was kind and generous, he forgave an infinite Number of Debts due to the Exchequer from private Persons in the City and Country, burning the Bonds and Registers of them in the publick Forum. He much recommended himself by several Acts of Generosity and Moderation; particularly, he increas'd the Allowance which by Trajan had been given to the Maintenance of great Numbers of poor Children, relieving likewise many decay'd Noble-men and Senators, whose Missortunes proceeded from no visible Fault of theirs.

In the same Year, and second of Adrian's Reign, Alexander Bishop of Rome, dy'd, and as some say, was Martyr'd, after he had held this Dignity about ten Years; being succeeded by Sixtus I, or Xistus, a Roman by Birth, and the fixth Bishop of Rome after St. Peter and St. Paul. About the same Time dy'd Primus Bishop of Alexandria, after ten Years continuance in that Office, and was fucceeded by Fustus, a Person of celebrated Piety, the fifth Bishop of this City after St. Mark, who continu'd about 11 Years. The two Churches of Rome and Alexandria flourished in the midst of the greatest Opposition; but that of Athens, having lost its Bishop Publius under Trajan's Persecution, fell into a low Condition, and the People for want of a Head and Governor, grew cold and languid, wanting but little of a total Apoltalie from the Christian Faith. Fill about this Time that excellent Man Quadratus, a learned Auditor and Disciple of the Apostles, being conflicted Bishop of the Place, set himself with a mighty Zeal to retrieve the ancient Spirit of Religion, and by a happy Management re-establish'd Order and Discipline, and kindled and blew up their Faith into a holy Flames Nordid he content himself with a bare Reformation of what was amils, but with infinite Diligence Preach of the Faith, and by daily Converts enlarg'd the Bounds of the Church; so that he obtain'd the particular Title of an Evangelist. This Quadrativ was a Man of extraordinary Parts and Abilities, and being Cotemporary with Philip's Virgin-Daughters, was endued with the lame Prophetick Gifts, as Enfebrus testifies; who also ranks him with the Chief of the Apostles Successors, and shows him tQ

to have been the first Apologist of the Christian Religion. Valefus, and some others after him, have thought that Quedratus the Apologist and the Bishop of Athens, were two distinct Persons, living in different Times; but their Arguments have been answer'd by Dr. Cave, in his Life dand to the Teneral Northment

of this holy Man.

A. D. 119. Hadri.

Dion. Spart.

The Emperor Adrian had not been very long in Rome, before several of the Northern Nations, as the Alaxes, Sarmatians and Dacians, began to make Devastations in the Roman Empire. Against these barbarous People the Emperor himself march'd with a very powerful Army; but upon his near Approach, the Name of Adrian, the Lieutenant of Trajan, brought them to a Submission; and the better to prevent their future Incursions, he broke down, the famous Bridge that Trajan had built over the Danube. In this Expedition, a Conspiracy was discover'd against his Person which occasion'd the Execution of four Consular Men; which Execution was disown'd by the Emperor, as done without his Consent and Approbation. Wherefore leaving Turbo Governor of Pannonia and Dacia, he return'd speedily to Rome, to purge himself from the Infamy and Envy of the Fact, making a large Distribution of Mony among the People, conferring great Favours upon many, and exhibiting magnificent Games and Spechacles in the City. Staying at Rome a short Time, he took a Resolution to visit the whole Empire in Person. and fee if all Things were well regulated and established: and taking with him a splendid Retinue, and a considerable Force, he fift enter'd Gaul, where he made a Lufiration of the Inhabitants, viewing the Cities and Forts, giving Marks of his Favour, as in all other Places of the Empire. In his Travels he usually said, That an Emperon ought to imitate the Sun, who carny'd his Light through ell the Regions of the Earth; and he generally travel'd on foot, always with his Head bare, making no Difference between the frozen Alps, and the scorehing Sands of Asypt. From Gaul he pass'd into Germany, where he frickly kept the Soldiers to Discipline and Handships, and carefully banish'd all Luxury and Delicacies from the Camp a particularly, he put down the Use of Arbors, hady Walks and Groves among the Soldiers, and cut off many superfluous Expences of his Officers; and to excite them by his own Example, he exercis'd himself in all Hardships, fed upon their meanest and coarsest Provisions, and often walk'd on foot twenty Miles together. After fome

Hadri.

121.

fome Stay in Germany he enter'd Belgium, and from A. D. thence pass'd over into Britain, where he reform'd many Abuses; and for the better Establishment of future Peace Hadri. and Security, he caus'd a mighty Wall to be made of Wood and Earth, extending from the River Edenin Cumberland to the Tine in Northumberland, 80 Miles in length, which might prevent the Incursions of the wilder Britains. This stupendous Work was begun in the fourth Year of this Emperor's Reign: And having taken all necessary Care in this Island, he return'd into Gaul, where he erected some famous Buildings, and conferr'd many Favours in that Country. Having thus visited all Gaul and the Borders, he directed his Journey for Spain, where being a Native, he was magnificently receiv'd; and after he had view'd many Places, he took up his Winter-Quarters in Tarragon, where he call'd an Assembly of all the Princes in Spain, and ordain'd many things for the Good and Safety of the Country. In this Year the Agyptians, after a long Concealment, finding one of their Sacred Bulls which they ador'd under the Title of Apis; the fight of him caus'd the People of Alexandria to fall into a great Tumult and Sedition.

Adrian having thus travell'd over all Spain, and the Ea- A. D. ftern Parts of the Empire, return'd toward Rome, in April, defigning after some convenient Stay, to survey the Hami rest of the Roman Dominions; and at this Time he appointed the exact Limits and Bounds of the Empire, from the barbarous Nations in the North. Where there wanted Rivers and other natural Marks and Divilions, he made use of large Stones, Pillars, Trees, and other Things; and to the High Germans, who at that Time were free, he appointed a King, which gain'd him much Respect from those People who were ready to revolt. Continuing in Rome for a considerable Space, towards the seventh Year of his Reign, he receiv'd Intelli- A. D. gence that the Parthians began to make War upon the 123. Empire: which caus'd him to haften his Journey into the Hadri. East: And making all necessary Preparations, he resolv'd to profecute the War in Person; which so alarm'd the Enemy, that they immediately su'd for a Peace, and ob tain'd it. This gave Adrian an Opportunity of pursu ing his Travels without Molestation; and beginning his lourney, he fhortly arriv'd in the Leffer Afia, furvey'd all its Provinces with Syria, erected many Temples and other publick Buildings, and then return'd into Greece to the fa-E 4

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mous City of Athens. In this Place he made a long Stay, A.D. follow'd the Studies and Religious Rites of Greece, took upon him the Place and Honour of Archon of Athens, ce-Hadri. lebrated all their folemn Sports, and gave many particular Laws and Privileges to the City; but especially he was ini-8. tiated into their Eleusinian Mysteries, which were accounted the most facred and venerable of the whole Gentile World, and by way of Eminence, were particularly flyl'd, The Mysteries. These were solemn and religious Rites perform'd to Ceres and Proferpine, in Memory of great Benefits receiv'd, whereof the Candidates were flyl'd puisas and to the full Participation of which, many times they were not admitted till after a five Years preparatory Trial, which had many feveral Steps, and each of them its peculiar Rites; and after all, they were oblig'd under

a folemn Oath, never to discover these mysterious Rites

A. D. 125. Hadri.

Eusch.

The Christians, the they often met with local and occasional Oppressions, were much eas'd since the Mitigation of the Persecution under Trajan, but how there arose a most grievous and heavy Persecution of the Church, as St. Ferom calls it; which was occasion'd partly by the Emperor's busie, and superstitious Zeal for the Pagan Rites, and partly by the infamous Lives of the Gnofficks and other Hereticks, who bearing the Name of Christians, brought a Scandal and an Odium upon their Profession. This by Reason of its Sharpness and Continuance, has been call'd by several, The fourth General Persecution; but it is not generally to accounted by the Ancients of for Tertullian fays, That Adrian publish'd no Laws or Edicis against the Christians, but the late Laws being unrepeal'd, there wanted not fuch as wou'd put them in Execution. So that it may not improperly be call'd a Revival, or perhaps a Continuance of the Third General Perfecution, which was not intirely ceas'd in Trajan's Reign. The Severity of this Persecution appears from the great Number of Martyts, mention'd in the old Martyrologies. We are told that Arrive Antoninus (whom some suppose the same with Adrian's Successor) being then Proconsul of Afta, and a fevere Perfecutor, all the Christians of the City where he rended unanimously beset his Tribunal, openly comeffing their Religion. Being amaz'd at the Multirude, he can'd some few of them to be put to Death, telling the felt, That if they defin a to end their Lives, they had Precipices and Halters enough, and need not throng thether

ther for Execution. As to the Martyrs, we have the Names and Accounts of many that fuffer'd in Rome and Italy, tho' not from very ancient Authors; particularly Eustachius, and his Wife Theopistes, with their two Sons, who are faid by the Emperor's Command to have been thrown to the Lions, and when the Mercy of the Beafts had spared them, they were burnt to Death in the Belly of a Brazen Bull. Symphorissa, the Wife of Getulus the Martyr, with her seven. Children is said to have suffer'd about the same Time, who first was hang'd up by the Hair of the Head and cruelly fcourg'd, and then with a ponderous Stone thrown into the Tiber; after which, her seven Children were put to as many several Deaths. We read also of Faustinus and Jobita, Citizens of Breffia, who fuffer'd Martyrdom with cruel Torments; at the Sight of which, one Calocerius, feeing their wonderful Patience, cry'd out, Great is the God of the Christians! and thereupon was apprehended, and became Partaker of the same Honour with them. Besides these, we have the Names of Antiochus in Sardinia, Sabina in Umbria, and several others, who obtain'd an immortal Crown.

The Persecution growing very hot and violent, the A. D. Christians found it necessary to remonstrate and declare their Case to the Emperor; among whom Quadratus Bi- Hadri. shop of Athens was principal, who presented an excellent Apology to Adrian in Writing, defending the Christian Religion from the Exceptions and Calumnies of its Enemies, Enfel. and vindicating it from those Pretences upon which evil Men fought its Ruin; particularly urging our Saviour's Miracles in these Words: 'The Works of our Saviour were always conspicuous; for they were true. Those who were cur'd, and fuch as were rais'd from the Dead, did not only appear after they were cur'd and rais'd, but also were afterwards seen of all; and that not only while our Saviour was conversant upon Earth, but also fricontinu'd alive a long Space after he was gone; infomuch fifthat some of them surviv'd even to our Times. Eusebius fays that in this Apology, he gave large Evidences both of his excellent Parts and Apostolick Doctrine; and St. Herom calls it a Work most profitable, replenish'd with frong Reasonings, great Light, and worthy of a Disciple of the Apostles. About the same Time Aristides, a Christian Philosopher of the same City, presented another Apology to the Emperor, fill'd with Passages of Philosophy, thewing an illustrious Instance of a fine Spirit, and

great Eloquence. Usuard and Ado add, that these two maintain'd the Divinity of our Saviour before Adrian, not only in their Writings, but also in a Discourse in his Presence. About the same Time Serenius Granianus, now Proconful of Afia, wrote a Letter to the Emperor, reprefenting to him the Injustice of the common Proceedings against the Christians; how unreasonable it was that without legal Trial, or Crime prov'd, they shou'd be put to Death, purely to gratifie the tumultuary Clamours of the People. With this Letter, and the two foremention'd Apologies, the Keeness of the Emperor's Fury was taken off, and Orders were taken that greater Moderation shou'd be us'd towards the Christians. To which purpose he dispatch'd away to Minucius Fundanus, Granian's Successor in his Proconfulthip, this following Rescript. I receiv'd a Letter, written to me from that eminent Person Serenius Granianus, your Predecessor. Nor do I think it a Matter fit to be pass'd over without due Enquiry; that the Christians may not be needlesty disquieted, nor Informers have Occasion and Encouragement for fraudulent Accusations. Wherefore if the Subjects of our Provinces can openly appear to their Indictments against the Christians, let them take that Course, and not deal by meer Noise and Clamour; it being much properer, if any Accusation be brought, that you bou'd have the Cognizance of it. If any Man shall prefer an Indictment, and prove that they have transgress'd the Laws, do you give Sentence according to the Quality of the Crime: But if it shall appear, that he brought it only out of Spite and Malice, take care to punish that Person according to the Hainousness of so mychievous a Design. The fame Rescript was sent by the Emperor to several other Governors of Provinces, so that the Persecution in a great Measure ceas'd, after a Year and a half's Continuance; and Adrian was so far wrought into a good Opinion of Christianity, that Lampridius affures us, he defign'd to have built a Temple to Christ, and to have receiv'd him into the Number of the Gods; and that he commanded Temples to be built in all Cities without Images, which were for a long Space call'd Hadriani; but was stop'd in his Proceedings by fome, who confulting the Oracle had been told. That if this succeeded, the Pagan Temples would be deserted, and all Men won'd become Christians.

A. D. The Emperor Adrian being return'd a fourth Time to 127-Rome in Peace and Prosperity, employ'd himself in the Af-Hadri. fairs of the City, and the Conversation of ingenious and

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learned

learned Men; being in a manner furrounded with Philo-Sophers, Astronomers, Poets, Orators, Grammarians, Muficians, Geometricians, Architects, Painters, and Statuaries; most of whom he surpass'd in their own Skill; declaring, That he never emitted any Kind of Knowledge that might be useful in Peace or War, either for a private Person or an Emperor. About this Time liv'd Agrippa, firnam'd Castor, a learned Christian, who wrote a very convincing Book against the Heresie of Basilides, as Eusebius informs us; in which he confuted the Errors of this Heretick, after he had discover'd them, and detected all his Frauds and Artifices: But we have nothing remaining of this Work. In A. D. the eleventh Year of Adrian, Heron Bishop of Antioch, ha- 128. ving held that Dignity about 20 Years, imitated his Prede-Hadri. ceffor St. Ignotius, in laying down his Life for his Flock; and was fucceeded by Cornelius, who was the fourth Bishop of Antioch after the Apostles, and continu'd about 14 Ensib. Years. In the same Year, and twelfth of Adrian, dy'd Sixtus or Xistus Bishop of Rome, and as some believe was martyr'd, after he had held this Dignity about ten Years; being succeeded by Telesphorus, a Grecian by Birth, who continu'd about eleven Years, and was the seventh Bishop of Rame after St. Peter and St. Paul. In the fol- A. D lowing Year dy'd the celebrated Justus Bishop of Alexan- 120. dria, after about eleven Years continuance in that Office; Hadri. and was succeeded by Eumenes, the fixth Bishop of this City, after the Evangelist St. Mark, who continu'd Bishop about thirteen Years.

About this Time the Emperor Adrian abolish'd an impious and Pagan Custom, too often us'd in some Parts and upon some Occasions; which was the offering Men in their Sacrifices to the Heathen Deities. And now having Dien. continu'd near three Years in Rome, he refolv'd upon a spart. farther Survey of the Empire, and cross'd the Mediterranean Sea into Africk; where he was received with incredible Satisfaction, not only for the Esteem which the Inhabitants had for him, but because his Arrival was attended with plentiful Showers of Rain, which the Country had. wanted for five Years together. After many Regulations A. D. and Buildings appointed, he return'd to Rome a fifth Time, 130. where he built a new Temple under the Name of Roma Hadri. and Venue; and fuddenly got ready for a new Journey into the East. He travell'd a second Time into Greece, and viewing all Parts, he caus'd those Buildings and Temples to be finish'd, which he formerly order'd to be begun, and enjoin'd

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enjoin'd others to be built. And thus continuing his Journey, he pass'd over into the Lesser Asia, and from thence into Syria; where by Letters and Envoys he invited all the Kings, Tetrarchs and Potentates in those Parts, not only Subjects and Allies, but also Neighbours and Strangers, to confult and converse with him in that Country. Among this numerous and splendid Concourse, the King of Parthia was one, to whom he freely fent his Daughter, who had been taken Prisoner by Trajan in the former Wars; for which generous Act many came to his Court to vifit, honour, and acknowledge him; all whom he receiv'd with fuch uncommon Courtesie and Civility, as rais'd the Envy and Concern of all others who had neglected this Opportunity.

Fran. &c.

About the Year 130, there arose certain Hereticks call'd Carpocratians, so nam'd from Carpocrates of Alexandria, a Magician and Platonick Philosopher, whom Enfebius accounts the Father of the Gnosticks. These however may be called a chief Branch of the Gnosticks, who held their principal Errors, and like them allow'd of Community of Women, and the most impudent and scandalous Actions imaginable; and by that means brought an Odium upon the Christians in general, acting all those Impleties with which the Pagans charg'd Christianity. As for their Theology, they held among other Things, that Jesus Christ was but pure Man, and the Son of Joseph; and that his Soul receiv'd more Energy from God, whilst it dwelt with him before its Union with the Body, than other Souls did; and that God was thus liberal to it, to enable it to overcome the Devils, who had created the World. They rejected the Old Teffament, but in the New allow'd of St. Matthew's Gospel, yet deny'd the Resurrection of the Dead, and perfuaded themselves that there was no such Thing as Evil in Nature, but only in Mens Imaginations. Carpoerates left a Son behind him nam'd Epiphanius, who tho he dy'd young, by means of the Platonick Philosophy, extreamly spread the Fables, and absurd Sentiments of his Father. The Libertinism and impious Practices of this Sect, alterwards produc'd another prodigious Herefie, call'd that of the Adamites, of which one Producer was Head. This Sect made it their Business to imitate Adam's Nakednels before his Fall, imagining themselves as innocent as He, fince their Redemption by the Death of Christ; and therefore met together naked, afferting, that if Adam had not finned, there wou'd have been no Marriages. These appear'd

appear'd about forty Years after the Carpocratians. But to return to the Year 130, about this Time, a Collection was made of Greek Verses, divided into eight Books, call'd by the Name of the Sibylline Oracles, taken as they feem from Prophefies, Histories, and Dogmas out of both Testaments. They are suppos'd to have been collected, if not forg'd, by some Platonick Christian of Alexandria, and were often us'd in Defence of the Christian Religion against the Pa-

The Emperor Adrian, having finish'd his magnificent Entertainments in the East, after a Survey of Syria, enter'd Palestine and Judaa, visiting all the principal Cities; Hadri. after which he fet forwards, and did the like in the fubdu'd Parts of Arabia. In the fame Year, the famous Jurisconsult or Lawyer, Salvius Julianus, by the Emperor's Order compos'd that Law call'd the Perpetual Edict; being a Collection of Rules to be observ'd by all succeeding Prætors and Governors of Provinces, that Justice might be uniform in the Empire; and call'd Edictum Perpetuum, because it was to continue in Force for ever. From Arabia Adrian pass'd into Ægypt, where he lost a dear and 132. beautiful Companion call'd Antinous; for whom he wept Hadri. with all the Tenderness and Weakness of a Woman, and shew'd the highest Respect for his Memory. Some report that this Youth devoted himself a Sacrifice for the Emperor; others that he was what his Beauty might probably incite him to be, and the too great Pleasure Adrian took in unnatural Love. He was so superstitious in this Matter, that the Grecians by his Order made a God of him, whence in an ancient Inscription at Rome, he is stil'd. The Affessor of the Gods in Ægypt. He also built a City to him in the Place where he dy'd, call'd Antinoe, erected a Temple, and appointed Priests and Prophets to attend it. instituted annual Solemnities, and every five Years facred Games, held not only in Ægypt, but in other Parts. Many of the Pagans themselves derided the Emperor's Folly and Weakness, and this new Augmentation to Idolatry prov'd the strengthning of Christianity. About the same Time Adrian commanded the holy City Ferusalem to be rebuilt with great Charge; which was perform'd with admirable Expedition, principally by the Affiftance of the Years, who began much to raise their short-liv'd Hopes and Expectations. In this the Emperor put a Roman Colony, and built a Temple to Jupiter Capitolinus, in the Room of the Temple of God, which extreamly offended # ARDOTALS

A. D. 131.

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A. D.

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the Jews, and afterwards rais'd greater Mischiefs than ever; and he likewise chang'd its former Name, and call'd it Alia Capitolina, which was done in the 16th Year of his Reign, and 62 Years after its Destruction by Tiem.

A. D. The following Year is remarkable for the Death of the 133. Herefiarch Bafilides in Alexandria; but much more for the Hadri. Conversion of the famous Justin; the Philosopher and Martyr to the Christian Religion, now about 20 Years of

Conversion of the famous Justin; the Philosopher and Martyr to the Christian Religion, now about 30 Years of Age. This Justin was a Native of the City of Sychem or Neapolis in Palestine, near Jacob's Well and Mount Gerizim, the Son of Priscus; he was a Grecian by Bitth and Religion, but having in vain fought for the true God among all the Sects of the Pagan Philosophers, and chiefly among the Platonicks, was converted to the Christian Falth in a private Conference between him and a certain ancient Man unknown to him, who advis'd him to adhere to the Prophets. The Study of these, and the other Friends to Christianity, together with the continual Examples of the Innocency of the Christians Lives, and the Constancy of their Deaths, intirely gain'd his Heart; but he did not lay aside his Habit nor Profession, but added to his great Skill in the Heathen Philosophy, a profound Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, becoming the principal and most eminent Champion of Christianity. In the mean Time the Emperor Adrian, having been above a Year and a half in Augypt and those Parts, quitted that Country, and return'd with a Design to winter in Athens. In this City, being displeas'd with the Agyptians, he wrote a Satyrical Letter to Servianus the Conful, giving a very detracting Character of them, and the Christians amongst them: And so much of it as concerns the latter, we shall transcribe from Vopiscus Saturninus, I have given my felf a perfect Understanding of Ægypt; which you, my well beloved Servianus, did sometime recommend to me, They are a light inconstant People, always in Suspence, and veering with every Stroke of Forenne.

Those who worship the God Serapis, one nevertheless Christians; and Men who call themselves the Bishops of Christ, are also Votaries to Serapis. There is no Ruler of the Synagogues of the Jews, no Samaritan, no Presbyter of the Christians, no Astrologar, no Magician, no Physician, that he worships Serapis. The Patriarch himself of Alexandria when becomes bither, is by some oblig'd to adore Serapis, by others to adore Christ. Serapis no common God to them all. Him the Christians, the Jews, and Persons of all Nations worship.

The chief Roman Communices was falous See

134. Hadri.

A. D.

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his changeable Humour, had persecuted the Christians in Alexandria, while he was there, and compell'd some light or false Professors to worship the Deities of the Country, which probably gave ground to his Censure, and to his charging the Imputation upon all. And about this Time it is said, that two Persons, nam'd Apelles and Ariston, presented Apologies to the Emperor; but we have no Account of the Particulars.

to a reasonable Quietness; but gathering Strength again, they were provok'd to a general Revolt and Rebellion, partly by Adrian's building a Pagan Temple in Ferusalem, and partly by his forbidding them the Use of Circumcision, as Spartian tells us. They began their Rebellion shortly after Adrian left Ægypt and the East, being headed and con firm'd by an Impostor, who by the Help of lighted Flar seem'd to vomit Flames of Fire, pretending he came down as a Light from Heaven, to deliver them from Tyranny and Bondage; and declaring, That he was the very Star foretold by Balaam; from whence he was call'd by the Name of Barcocab, fignifying the Son of a Star, and accordingly was worship'd and receiv'd as the Messiah: Which involved the Yews of all Nations into this Sedition. But this Impostor acted more like a Robber than a King; for gathering valt Numbers together, they began with a barbarous ravaging of all Judaa, Galilee and Syria, and fell most severely upon the innocent Christians, using all Kinds of Cruelties to compel them to renounce and blaspheme the true Messiah, and tormenting them also because they refus'd to join in their Rebellion. In the Beginning Trnius Rufus, Governor of Judaa, having some Auxiliary Forces fent him by the Emperor, march'd out against the Multitude; and making Use of their Madness and Despecation as an Occasion of his sparing none, he slew infinite Numbers of all Ranks, Men, Women and Children. At first the Romans despis'd the Power of the Jews; but in a thort Time their Numbers did so prodigiously increase from all Parts of the Empire, as expecting a Deliverance,

most experienc'd Commanders against these obstinate and persidious People. And Matters were now brought to that Extremity, that Dian tells us, that the whole World was in a manner shaken by this terrible Commotion of the Jews. The chief Roman Commander was Julius Se-

the Emperor Trajan fo far humbled them as to bring them

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verus, Governor of Britain, who with great Difficulties divided their united Forces, gain'd several bloody Victories, and in the first Year of the War, besieg'd, demolish'd

and burnt the new City of Jerusalem.

A. D. 135. Hadri. 18 19.

But the principal and most remarkable Action, hapned in the second Year of this War; which was the Siege of Bether or Bitther by the Romans, a very strong Place, not far from Jerusalem, whither vast Numbers of the Jews were retired, as to their last Refuge. This Siege was long and miserable to the Jews, who were reduc'd to all the Extremities of Hunger and Thirst, and at length subdu'd with a most terrible Slaughter, in the latter End of the 18th Year of Adrian, and the Month August, in which Month, as St. Ferom observes, Ferusalem was formerly taken by Nebuchadnezzar, and also the Temple destroy'd by The Jewish Writers and Rabbins do represent the doleful Slaughter at Bether, as the most deplorable Stroke that ever their Nation receiv'd, besides the Destruction of Ferusalem by Titus. Some of their Expressions concerning the Slaughter are to this Purpose: 'The Horses waded in Blood up to the Nostrils; there were slain four hundred thousand; and Adrian wall'd a Vineyard of fixteen 'Miles about with dead Bodies. There were found the Brains of three hundred Children upon one Stone; and ' three Chests full of tatter'd Philacteries, containing three Bushels every Chest.

Enfeb. Dian. Spart.

In the mean Time, the Emperor Adrian having winter'd at Athens, was again admitted into the Grand Eleusinian Mysteries, which were different from those he had obtain'd nine or ten Years before, these being solemniz'd only once in four Years, in the second of every Olympiad. After these and many other Pagan Ceremonies, the Emperor refolv'd to conclude his whole Journey, and return to Rome for the rest of his Days, having spent about thirteen Years in furveying the Empire, besides the several Times of his Continuance at Rome. This was the fixth and last Time of his Return to the City, where his Entrance was exceeding grateful to the People; and tho' he began to be old and unwieldly, he was no less diligent in the publick Administration than formerly. He made several new Laws and Ordinances; particularly he forbad Masters to kill their Slaves, as had been before allow'd, but order'd them to be try'd by the Laws in all Capital Crimes. He also ordain'd that all such Persons as wilfully consum'd their Estates, should be first expos'd to publick Shame in

the Amphitheatre, and then turn'd out of the City. And now finding himself indispos'd, and without an Heir, he took Care for a Successor; and after many Consultations about so weighty a Matter, he at length made Choice of Lucius Commodus, tho' contrary to the Advice of his Council, a Thing not usual 'till then. He insisted upon the Virtues and Merits of the Person, and having adopted him, and entituled him Cafar, he chang'd his Name to Elius Verus; ordering likewise the Celebration of the Circensian Games, and a Donative to the Soldiers and People. Not long after, he commanded Severianus, a great and popular Man, to be flain, together with his own Nephew Fuscus, upon Suspicion of Treason and design'd Usurpation: He likewise commanded some o- Hadri. thers to be put to Death upon Pretences not wholly justifiable, his Infirmities now disclosing his innate Cruelty, which also had before this Time shewn it self too openly in some Instances.

In this Year, after many violent Struggles and Contests. Julius Severus ended the Jewish War; and tho' he came off Conqueror, yet he would not have chosen many Triumphs at the Price of so much Blood. But the extraordinary Strength that was now in the Jews was given them for their Deltruction, and the more dangerous this Rebellion had been, the more severe was the Emperor's Punishment. and the greater his Care in preventing the like Mischiefs for the future. The War was concluded in near three Years Time, with the Death of their false Messiah, the Demolishment of fifty of their strongest Cities, the Destruction of 985 of their best Towns, and the Death of 580 thousand Men in several Battels and Skirmishes, besides infinite Numbers of others confum'd by Famines, Fires and Diseases; so that their whole Land was laid waste and defolate, and there feem'd to be almost an utter Extirpation of the Fewish Name and Nation. Their own Writers tell us, that twice the Number of Jews perish'd upon this Occasion than ever came out of Egypt; and that they suffer'd more under Adrian, than under Nebuchadnezzar, or under Titus: so heavy was the Hand of Heaven upon this wretched Generation. Die tells us that this Desolation was foretold by the falling afunder of Solomon's Sepulchre, and by Wolves and Hyana's, who howl'd about the Streets, and devour'd People in the Fields. Those Fews that survivid this second Ruin of their Nation, were fold in incredible Numbers, of all Ages and Sexes, like Dogs and Horfes in VOL. II. publick

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publick Markets appointed for that purpose. Others were transported into Egypt, and other Countries, where some perish'd by Shipwrecks, some by Famine, and others were stain like Beasts by the Pagans. This was the last and most dreadful Dispersion of the Jews, when they were forbidden so much as to set foot on, or come in View of their own Soil or Land, becoming Sojourners and Strangers in all Nations, and like Cain, Fugirives and Vagabonds throughout the whole World; and like him having also a Mark upon them, that they might not be utterly exterminated. And by this Means also the Providence of God advanc'd the Christian Religion, and now entirely freed it from the Servitude of the Law; for 'till now, not only the Christians of Judaa, but also the Bishops of Jerusalem, were of the Circumcision; and, as far as was consistent with Christianity, kept to the Observations of the Law. From the Death of Simeon in 107, to this Dispersion, there were 13 Bishops of Ferusalem; of whom we have only the Names, Diz. Justus, Zachaus, Tobias, Benjamin, John, Matthias, Philip, Seneca, Justus, Levi, Ephrem, Joseph, and Judas, who was the last Christian Bishop of the Circumcision. This great Dispersion happed in the 20th Year of the Reign of Adrian, under the Confulfhips of Commodus and Pompeianus, 103 Years after our Saviour's Crucifixion, 66 after the Deltruction of the Temple by Titus, and 36 after the Death of the last Apostle St. John. ew of Jernialess, even from the agent this, upon pain



WHILE

CHAP. II.

From the last and entire Dispersion of the Jews, to the Beginning of the fourth General Persecution of the Church, under the Emperor M. Aurelius, or Antoninus Philosophus.

Containing the Space of about 25 Tears.

I. A FTER all these deplorable Missortunes that be- A. D. fel the Jews, the Emperor Adrian, confidering 137. that the Remains of their holy City and Temple Hadri. was one great Cause of their Rebellion, order'd the very Marks and Relicts, especially of the Temple, to be entired ly raz'd, and to be plow'd up according to the Roman Cu+ Dien. stom; which was the highest Mark of their Ignominy, and Englib. final Desolation, and also the full Accomplishment of all &c. our Saviour's Predictions. This was compleated in the Month of August; and at the same Time, all the Jews in Palestine, who were yet unfold, were banish'd for ever out of their own native Country, and their whole Race for-bidden to fet Foot upon, or fo much as to come within View of Jerusalem, even from the highest Hill, upon pain of immediate Death. Only with great Difficulty they obtain'd the Favour, of going every Year, upon the 10th Day of August, to approach the Place, and to deplore their unexpressible Loss and Misery; and, as St. Jerom adds, to admire the Completion of all the ancient Propheties. In the same Year Adrian, out of the Ashes and Ruins of the old City build a new one; and the better to efface the Name of Ferusalem, he call'd it Elia Capitolina, as he had done before this last Revolt, by which Name it was call'd for several Ages; cauting it also to be inhabited wholly by Romans and Foreigners. This City much differ'd from the other in the Situation; for Mount Calvary, the ordinary Place of Execution, was now inclos'd within the Walls of it, and Mount Sion, the Place of the Temple, and all the Southern Parts of the old City, excluded, left defolate, and afterwards cover'd with Wood, Herbs and Rubbish. Adrian erected also a Roman Theatre in this new

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City, employing for this Edifice, and his idolatrous Temples here, the same Stones that had serv'd for the Temple and Sanctuary of the living God. And to prophane this City after the most notorious manner, he caus'd to be engraven, and put upon the Gate leading to Bethlehem the Figure of a Swine; which, of all Beasts, the Fewist Nation most abhort'd. Then, not contented with that Mark of Slavery, he erected also a Statue to the Honour of Venus, in the Place where our Lord was crucify'd; and another to Jupiter, where he was bury'd; and a Temple to Adons, at Bethlehem, where he was born: All which stood

'till the Time of Constantine.

The fad Desolation of the Jews open'd the Eyes of great Numbers, who now clearly saw the Hand of Heaven, and more readily embrac'd Christianity; and as this new City became inhabited, so in a short Time a new Church of Christians was establish'd here, consisting all of Gentile Converts, and of fuch as entirely renounc'd Circumcifion, and the Ceremonies of the Law. Of these St. Mark was the first Bishop, a most learned and celebrated Person, who continu'd in the Place about 19 or 20 Years; being the first Bishop of Jerusalem of the Uncircumcision. In the Beginning the Christians of this City slourish'd beyond all Expectation, and became fo renown'd for the Eminency of their Miracles, that Aguila himself, the Emperor's Fatherin-law, and whom he had made Governor and Overseer of the Buildings of the City, being convinc'd, was baptiz'd, and embrac'd Christianity. This Aquila was a Native of Sinope in Pontus, but tho' he chang'd his Religion, yet he did not forfake all his Errors; fo that still pursuing his old Magick, and his astrological Studies, notwithstanding the frequent Admonitions that were given him, he was cast out of the Church, as an irreclaimable Person. Which he refented as so great an Affront, that he renounc'd the Faith, was circumcis'd, and became a Jewish Proselyte; after which he made himself Master of the Hebrew Tongue, and translated the Bible into Greek; with Defign both to ruin the Reputation of the Septuagint, and to corrupt and darken the Prophesies relating to our Saviour. This Tranflation is highly esteem'd by the Jews, who account it the most exact of all others.

Capitol.

In the Year 138, and 21st of Adrian, dy'd L. Commodus, on the first Day of January; upon which, not long after, on the 25th of February, the Emperor adopted Tisus Antoniums, an eminent Man, afterwards sirnam'd Pius, at the

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fame Time obliging him to adopt two others, namely, Marcus Aurelius, and Lucius Verus, two promising Youths, who afterwards became Emperors. All which being eftablish'd with the Approbation of the Senate and chief of Rome, and the Emperor fickning and declining, he caus'd himself to be carry'd to the City of Baiæ; where his Pains became very tormenting, and fometimes threw him into Convulsions; so that he often endeavour'd to destroy himfelf, crying out, How miserable is it to seek Death, and not be able to find bim! He had Recourse to all the impious Arts of Magick and Sorcery, and then made use of Gifts and Promifes, and fometimes Threatnings to oblige his Attendants to kill him. But some alledg'd Pity, some Piety, and others Fear; 'till at last by the Advice of his Physicians, he abstain'd from all Kind of Sustenance, which brought him to an easie Death; he in the mean Time sporting with some remarkable peculiar Verses, enquiring of his Soul, Into what gloomy Place it design'd to go? Thus dy'd Adrian, a Prince of extraordinary Virtues with a great Mixture of Vices, leaving the World on the 10th Day of July, under the Consulships of Camerinus and Niger, being in the 62d Year of his Age, and having reign'd 20 Years, and 11 Months, wanting one Day.

As the Wisdom of Adrian's Government was ad- A. D. mir'd by all, so was his Wisdom in chusing Titus Antoni- 138. nus no less applauded, who was immediately, without ANTO-Contradiction, acknowledg'd his Successor, and obey'd as NINUS Emperor. This Antoninus was a Foreigner of Nismes in Pius, Gaul, now above 50 Years of Age; and in a short Time the sixhe shew'd himself to be one of the most excellent Princes results of the World for Virtue and Munificence; and govern'd Emperor. the Roman Empire with the greatest Authority, Justice, Capitol, Moderation and Clemency. He had all the Qualifications &c. that might render a Prince amiable, as a most graceful Aspect, and a happy Constitution, attended with a mild and pacifick Temper, and a learned and eloquent Tongue; and he was so entirely free from all Kinds of Vices, that in that Particular he much exceeded Trajan, and the belt of his Predecessors. For which Reason he was compar'd to Numa, the second King of Rome; and upon several Accounts he had the Sirname of Pins given him by the Senate, who at the same Time stil'd him, Father of Virtues. He shew'd himself exceeding affable, easie, and pleafant to all Men; and he often with'd, To be such an Em

peror to his People, as He, if he were a depriv'd Person, wou'd desire another Prince to be. But he was very strict as to his Servants Advantages, and took a particular Care that none of his Courtiers shou'd make any Profit of his Favours to another, nor take Bribes or Gratuities of fuch as were Suiters to him; for which Reason he generally gave Audience and Answer to all Men himself in Person; and in these Matters he knew the Qualifications and Difference between Men to an extraordinary Perfection. He always punish'd Criminals with great Commiseration, and often pardon'd them, whenever he faw a fair Prospect of their Amendment; and to fuch as often discours'd with him of the Valour of Julius Casar, and other Heroes, his common Answer was, That he more desir'd the Preservation of one Friend or Subject, than the Death of a thousand Enemies. Those few Wars he had in the Beginning of his Reign, gain'd him fuch Reputation in all Parts, that for many Years after he rul'd the World by his own Authority, with little or no Bloodshed; so that Aur. Victor affures us, That all Kings, Nations and People stood in awe of him, and at the same Time so lov'd and esteem'd him, That they accounted him rather their Father and Patron, than their Lord and Emperor; and all unanimously chose him for their Judge and Arbitrator of Controversies, looking upon him as tho' he had come down from Heaven. In thort, Posterity had so great a Veneration for his Memory, that for near a hundred Years, the Soldiers and Roman People wou'd not look upon any Man as their Emperor, 'till he had taken upon him the Name of Anto-781721US.

Antonians, according to his merciful Temper, made it his first Care to free those Persons, whom Adrian in his last Sickness had mark'd out for Death; declaring, That Adrian, if he had recover'd, wou'd have done the same. Then taking his Remains to Rome, with great Solemnity he bury'd them there; and, notwithstanding he was much oppos'd, he deify'd Adrian, according to the Roman and Pagan Custom. Then he made it his Business to seek for Men able to govern the Provinces of the Empire; always conferring great Honours upon Lovers of Justice, and the most deserving Persons. He exactly inform'd himself of the Revenues of the Publick; but was never fatisfy'd with the Gain that arose from an oppress'd Province; being very ready to hear all Complaints made against his Collectors and other like Officers. And to thew his great Liberality

berality and Bounty, he foon gave away most of his former Estate and Goods in Favours and Acts of Charity; fo that when his Empress Faustina repin'd at his Generofity, he reprehended her as ignorant, and gave her to understand, That as soon as he was posses'd of the Empire, he quitted all private Interests, and had nothing of his own, but that all belong'd to the Publick. In Matters of Equity and just Government, he was no less vigilant than his Predeceffor Adrian; but he went contrary to his Opinion as to Travels, and refolv'd never to depart from Rome during his Reign, only for Hunting and ordinary Recreations. Under this mild and generous Government, the Christians enjoy'd a happy Tranquillity, and great Prosperity; tho' the Heathens, who generally ascrib'd all publick Calamities to them, cou'd not want Opportunities and Pretences of afflicting them; so that this excellent Reign was not wholly without Martyrs; particularly Telesphorus Bishop of Rome, who fuffer'd in the first Year, after he had been 11 Years Bishop. He was succeeded by Hyginus, an Athenian by Birth, Son of a Philosopher, who continu'd about four Years, and was the eighth Bishop of Kome after St. Peter and St. Paul.

In the following Year, Antoninus the Emperor marry'd his Daughter Faustina to Marcus Aurelius, and made him Cafar; gave a King to the Quadi, and another to the Armenians. About the same Time, Justin Martyr, after several Journies and Voyages, fix'd his Habitation principally at Rome, dwelling, as appears from the Acts of his Martyrdom, about the Timothine Baths, which were upon the Viminal Mount. Here he made many Converts, and kept a fort of a School for the Benefit of the Gospel; and among his Scholars, Tatian was most celebrated, who afterwards became the Head of a Sect call'd the Encratites. Justin strenuously employ'd himself to defend and promote the Cause of Christianity, and particularly to confute and beat down the Herefies that then most infected the Church, writing a Book against all forts of Heresies. And now there was sufficient Occasion for his Pen, for about the same Time two grand Heresiarchs came to Rome, Valent tinus and Cerdo. The former was an Agyptian, learned and eloquent, and made Profession of Plato's Philosophy; who being highly ambitious, and displeas'd at another's being preferr'd to a Bishoprick before him, in a great Meafure quitted his Faith with his Country; and coming to Rome, under the notion of an orthodox Christian, by his berality

A. D. 139. An. Pii

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> Infinuations created infinite Mischiefs. Cerdo came out of Syria, and spread his damnable Opinions at Rome; but by his open Abjuration of them, he found greater Opportunity of venting them, and in a fhort Time produc'd that notorious Sect call'd the Marcionites. In the Year 140, the great Astronomer Phlegon of Trallia, the Emperor Adrian's Freed-Man, finish'd his famous Calculation of the Olympiads; in which he particularly takes notice of that miraculous Eclipse of the Sun that hapned at our Saviour's Paffion.

A.D. 141. An. Pii

- Antoninus reigning in all Prosperity, in the third Year of his Government, his Empress Faustina dy'd; and tho' the was a bad Woman, the Senate out of Love to her Husband appointed her a Temple and Priestesses, publick Games to her Honour, and Statues of Gold and Silver. The Emperor admitted of all this Paganish Superstition,

and made himself a charitable Establishment for the Maintenance of certain young Children, whom he call'd by the Name of Faustina's Children, in Memory of his deceas'd Empress. In the following Year he instituted new Games at Puteoli, in Honour of his Predecessor Adrian to be so-

lemniz'd every five Years under the Title of Pia or Pialia. In which Year, Hyginus, after he had been four Years Bishop of Rome, dy'd; and was succeeded by Pins I, an Italian of Aquileia, Son of Ruffinus, who continu'd in the Chair about 15 Years, and was the ninth Bishop of Rome after St. Peter and St. Paul. About the same Time dy'd Eumenes Bishop of Alexandria, after he had held this Dignity about thirteen Years, and was succeeded by Marcus, a Perfon of noted Piety, the seventh Bishop of this City after the Evangelist St. Mark, who continu'd in the Place about ten Years. Besides these Changes and Successions, in the fame Year dy'd Cornelius Bishop of the third capital City Antioch, after 14 Years continuance in that See; being fucceeded by Eros, who was the fifth Bishop of Antioch, after the Apostles, and continu'd such for about 26 Years.

About the fifth Year of the Emperor's Reign, Valentimus, having perverted many, and discover'd his abomina-An. Pii ble Errors, was censur'd by the Church, and entirely excluded the Congregation; which was fo far from humbling him, that retiring to Cypras, he spread the Venom of his Doctrine with greater Boldness than ever; and form'd a Seek which prov'd as strong and numerous as any be-

fore and continu'd 'till the fourth Century. Valentinus form'd his Notions from Pagan Philosophers and Poets, Women and

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and imagin'd certain Gods to the Number of thirty, which he call'd Aones, that is Ages, out of the Poet Hefiod's Fables. He wou'd have fifteen of the thirty to be Male, and the other fifteen Female; and affirm'd, that our Saviour sprung, like another Pandore, out of their Mixture; adding, that he pass'd with a Body brought out of Heaven through the Virgin, as through a Conduit or Pipe. This Sect was a Branch of the Gnosticks, and all the Valentinians glory'd in that Name. They constituted three Orders of Men, the Spiritual, the Animal, and the Carnal; affirming that the first shou'd be fav'd by their Knowledge, the second by their Works, and the third had no Salvation at all. They held that Christ had a fantastical or imaginary Body upon Earth, and ridicul'd the Orthodox for afferting his two Natures. They deny'd the Refurrection of the Body, held a Transmigration of Souls, and believ'd with the Anthropomorphites, that God had a Body, and of Human shape, with many other absurd Opinions. In the next Year according to Tertullian, began A. D. the famous Heresie of the Marcionites, which took its Name from Marcion, a Person of Sinope in Pontus, who An. Pii in his younger Years follow'd the Stoick Philosophy; but being convicted of Uncleaness with a Virgin, he was excommunicated by his Father, who was a pious Man and a Bishop. Upon which, after the Death of Hyginus Bishop of Rome, he repaired to that City; where, not being admitted to the Ecclefiastical Communion, because his Father still oppos'd it, he out of Revenge threatned to form a Schism that shou'd last for ever; and accordingly he joyn'd with Cerdo then in Rome, embrac'd his Herefie, and added many other Errors, together with almost all those of the Valentinians and Gnosticks. He held with Cerdo two several Gods, the one Good, and the other Evil; the latter he said was the Creator of the World, and the Author of the Law; and the former the Redeemer of the World, and the Author of the Gospel. Origen affirms, that he suppos'd there was a God of the Jews, a God of the Christians, and a God of the Gentiles. Tertulian speaks of nine, and curiously observes the rest of his Opinions; as, that he deny'd the Resurrection of the Body, rejected the Incarnation of our Saviour, and all the Old Testament, with most of the New.; condemn'd Marriage, excluding Married Persons from Salvation; allow'd Persons to be Baptized three feveral Times, and the Living sometimes to be Baptized in the Room of the Dead; and also

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Women to administer the Sacraments. The Disciples of this Herefiarch added many other Errors to his Dogma's; which in no long Time were spread abroad in Ægypt, Sy-

ria and Arabidas far as Persia.

As this Age produc'd Abundance of Herefies, that hin-A. D. der'd the Advancement of the Christian Faith, so it was 145. no less fertil in great Numbers of spurious and dangerous A. D. Books; promoted, no doubt, by the Prince of Darkness, 146. to obfuscate the Brightness of the Gospel. Among these, we may name the Histories of Seth, Enoch, Cham, &c. the Prayers of Joseph, the Assumption of Abraham, the Testament of Moses, the Repentance of Adam, the History

of Jannes and Jambres, the Testament of Job, the Ascenfion of Esaias, the Gospel of Judas according to Basilides, the Gospel of Nicodemus, the Book of Zacharias, the Ascension of St. Paul, with a Multitude of the like fabulous and pernicious Writings, which are now happily perish'd. But to return from spurious to genuine Writings, about

the tenth Year of this Emperor, Appion of Alexandria fi-A. D. nish'd his famous Work of the Roman History; of which An. Pii we have a confiderable Part still remaining. In which

Year, which was just 900 Years after the Building the City of Rome, the Emperor order'd the Celebration of the grand Secular Games, as it were solemnizing the Birth-Day of the City; all which were perform'd with great Pomp and Magnificence, in which were expos'd infinite variety of strange Beasts, and other Animals. This was the third Time that these Games were celebrated fince the Birth of our Saviour, which was 59 Years after the last under Domitian, and 100 after those under Claudius, whose Example and Method Antoninus follow'd. The following

Year was attended with another Solemnity, which was the Emperor's Decennalia; for having finish'd his first ten Years Government, he renew'd his Time with much Ce-

An. Pii remony and Splendor, according to the Custom of Augu-10 11.

flus, and the fucceeding Emperors.

About the twelfth Year of this Reign the Christi-A. D. ans, who had fuffer'd much from Hereticks, began now 150. to be more severely treated by Pagans: For the Antoni-An. Pii mus was fignally mild and generous, and put out no Edicts against them, yet the Christians, being generally traduc'd 33. A and defam'd as a wicked and barbarous Generation, scandalous and abominable in their Nocturnal Assemblies, had hard Measure in all Places, and were frequently persecut-

ed

ed by vertue of the particular Edicts of former Emperors. and the general standing Laws of the Roman Empire. To vindicate them from the foul Aspersions cast upon them, and to mitigate the Severities us'd towards them, the great Justin about this Time publish'd his first Apology, which he inscrib'd to Antoninus Pius the Emperor, and his two adopted Sons M. Aurelius and L. Verus, to the Senate, and by them to the whole People of Rome; h wherein with great Strength and Evidence of Reason he defended the Chri-' stians from the common Objections and Calumnies of their Enemies, prov'd the Divinity of the Christian Faith, ' and shew'd how unjust and unreasonable it was to proceed against them without due Conviction and Form of Law; acquainted them with the innocent Rites and U-' fages of the Christian Assemblies, and lastly put the Emperor in mind of the Practice of his Predecessor Adrian ' in this Matter; who had commanded that the Christians 'shou'd not be needlesty and unjustly vex'd, but that their 'Cause shou'd be travers'd and determin'd in open Judicatures; annexing to his Apology a Copy of the Refcript which Adrian had fent to Minucius Fundanus, to that purpose. This Apology is written with the Spirit and Freedom of an old Prophet, yet with all the Decency and Respect due to the Character of an Emperor; and contains so much of the Doctrine, Manners and Customs of the Primitive Christians, that it is one of the most confiderable Records of Antiquity. We there find the Do-Erine of the Church concerning the Trinity, the Incarnation of our Saviour, and Eternal Life; as also the Proofs of the Christian Faith, the Holiness and Conversation of its Professors, together with a Description of their Assemblies, and their Ceremonies us'd in the Administration of both the Sacraments.

Justin's happy Address wanted not its desired Success: For the Emperor in his own Nature of a merciful and generous Disposition, being mov'd partly by this Apolo- Epiph. gy, and partly by the Notice he had receiv'd from other Parts of the Empire, wrote in favour of the Christians to the Athenians, Thessalonians, and to all Greece; besides which in the 17th Year of his Reign, he issu'd out this publick Edict, directed to the common Assembly of Asia. I am very well affured, that the Gods themselves will take care, that the Christians shall not pass undiscover'd, it being much more their Concern, than it can be yours, to punish those who refuse to worship them. But you the more strong-

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ly confirm them in their own Opinions, while you vex and oppress them, and accuse them as Impious and Atheistical: nor can a more acceptable Kindness be done them, than that being accus'd, they may seem to chuse Death, for the sake of that God whom they worship. By which means they became Conquerors, being ready to lay down their Lives, rather than be persuaded to comply with your Commands. As for the Earthquakes that have been, or that do yet happen, it is fit to advertise you, whose Minds are apt to despond under such Accidents, to compare your own Case with theirs, They at such a Time are much more secure and confident in their God; whereas you feeming ignorant of God all that Time, neglect both the Rites of other Gods, and the Religion of that immortal Deity, nay banish and persecute to Death the Christians that worship him. Concerning these Men, several Governors of Provinces have formerly written to my Father of Sacred Memory: To whom he return'd this Answer, That they shou'd be no ways molested, unless it appear'd that they attempted something against the State of the Roman Empire. Yea, I my self have received many Intimations of this Nature, to which I answer'd according to the Tenor of my Father's Constitution. After all which, if any shall still proceed to create them Trouble, meerly because they are Christians, let him that is indicted be discharged, tho' acknowledg'd to be a Christian, and let the Accuser himself undergo the Punishment. We are not ignorant, that Valesius, Dacier and several other learned Men, upon the account of the Inscription, wou'd have this Imperial Edict to be the Decree of the succeeding Emperor Marcus Aurelius; but all their Arguments we think sufficiently answer'd by Monf. Tillemont, who intimtaes, that by this Indulgence, the Christians generally remain'd in great Peace and Security throughout the rest of this Reign. In the same Year that this Edict was publish'd, Marcus Bishop of Alexandria dy'd, after he had held this Dignity about ten Years; and was fucceeded by Celadion, a Person greatly belov'd in that City, who continu'd in the See about 14 Years, being the eighth Bishop of Alexandria after the Evangelist St. Mark.

A. D. The Church of God on one fide enjoy'd great Ease and Prosperity, but on the other was infected with many and An. Pii new Herefies; particularly, with those of the most absurd and sensless Sects, call'd the Ophites and the Sethians. The 16. former proceeded from the Nicolaitans and Gnofticks, being Tren. call'd Ophites or Serpentines, from the great Veneration &cc.

they had for the Serpent, which they faid taught Men the Knowledge of Good and Evil. When their Priests celebrated their Mysteries, they made a Serpent come forth from a Hole, which after it had roll'd it self over the Things defign'd to be offer'd, they said that Fesus Christ had fanctify'd them, and then deliver'd them to the People who worshipped them. The other Sect call'd Sethians, who drew their Original from Valentinus, were no less extravagant; they held that Cain and Abel were created by two Angels; and that the latter being kill'd, the fupreme Power inhabited Seth; and that the Angels by their mutual Impurities drew on the Flood, which destroy'd their wicked Offspring; but that some of them having crept into the Ark, gave a new Original to wicked Men. They wrote many Books entituled Seth, and some bearing the Names of the other Patriarchs; and gave out, That Jesus Christ was either Seth, or his Vicar. Both these Seets held many other fabulous and absurd Notions; which shews to what an Abyss of Folly Men may fall, when they are abandon'd by God to their own dark Inventions, and have abandon'd themselves to the false Light of their weak Reason.

Besides these sensless Seets, which were of no very long A. D. Continuance, those of the Valentinians and Marcionites, began now extreamly to increase in many Parts, becom- An. Pii ing much more dangerous than the other. Of these the famous Justin was a strenuous Opposer; and the Brightness of the Catholick and only true Church, being always the same, and continuing stedsast like it self, was greatly increased and augmented. Justin, not long after the Emperor's Edict, left Rome, and revisited the Eastern Parts of the Empire; and arriving at Ephesus, fell into the Acquaintance of Tryphon the Jew, a Man of great Note and Eminency, who had fled his Country in the late War and Rebellion against the Romans; since when he had liv'd in Greece, and principally in Corinth, where he had much improved himself by conversing with the Greeian Philosophers. With this Champion Justin enter'd the Lists in a A. D. two Day's Dispute, the Account of which he has given us in his Dialogue with that subtle Man: Wherein he An. Pii admirably defended and made good the Truth of the Christian Religion; and prov'd from an infinite Number of Passages of the Old Testament, That Jesus Christ was the Messiah, and the Word, who first appear'd to the Patriarchs, and afterwards condescended to be made ' Man,

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Man, and to be born of the Virgin Mary for our Salvation. He not only dissolved all the Jewish Pleas and
Pretensions against Christianity, but also discovered their
implacable Spite and Malice, who not only barely content to reject that Profession, sent peculiar Persons about
the World, to spread abroad, That Jesus the Galilean
was a Deceiver and Seducer, and his whole Religion
nothing but a Cheat and Imposture; and that in their
publick Synagogues they solemnly anathematized all that
turn'd Christians, hating and destroying them, whenever
they got them in their Power. The Issue of the Conference was, that the Jew acknowledged himself highly
pleased, professing he found more than he expected; wishing he might enjoy it oftener, and begging his Friendship,
in what Part of the World soever he was.

A. D. In the 19th Year of this Emperor's Reign, dy'd Mark, 156. the first Bishop of Ferusalem after the last Dispersion of An. Pii the Fews, after he had held the Dignity 19 or 20 Years;

18 he was succeeded by Cassanus, who was the 16th Bishop of this City after the Apostle St. Fames, and second of

he was succeeded by Cassianus, who was the roth Bishop of this City, after the Apostle St. James, and second of the Uncircumcision; but how long he continu'd in this See is uncertain, tho' some say it was eight Years. In this same Year some have fix'd the Beginning of Montanus's Heresse; but others, with better Reason, have plac'd

A. D. it 14 or 15 Years after. In the 20th Year of this Empe157. ror, Pius, after he had been 15 Years Bishop of Rome,
An Pii dy'd; and was succeeded by Anicetus a Syrian, the Son of
12 one John de Vicomurco, who continu'd in the See about
11 Years, and was the tenth Bishop of Rome, after St.

Ensel. Peter and St. Paul. In the Beginning of this Bishop's
Irm. Time, the Quartodeciman Controversie began to arise be-

tween the Eastern and Western Churches, which was concerning the Time of the Observation of Easter; the former, according to the Jewish Passover, keeping to one particular Full-Moon; and the latter, according to the Resurrection, keeping to one particular Sunday; and both justifying themselves by Apostolical Practice and Tradition. That this Fire might not break out into a greater Flame, the renowned Polycarp came from Smyrna to Rome, to interpose with Anicetus, and the chief of the Western Church. But the he cou'd not end the Controversie, and they also disagreed about some other small Matters, yet there was no great Contention between them, nor any Violation of Charity. In Token whereof they communicated together at the Holy Sacrament; and Anicetus to put.

the greater Honour upon Polycarp, gave him leave to confecrate the Eucharist in his own Church or Assembly; after which they parted peaceably; each Side tho' retaining their ancient Rites, yet maintaining the Peace and Communion of the Church. During this great Man's Stay at Rome, he principally fet himself to convince Gainfayers, teltifying the Truth of those Doctrines he had receiv'd from the Apostles, by which he recover'd many to the Church who had been infected with Errors, especially with the Herefies of Marcion and Valentinus. And when Marcion once accidentally met him in the Street, and refenting it, that he did not falute him, call'd out to him, Polycarp, own us; the good Man reply'd in a just Indignation, I own thee to be the First-born of Satan. So tellgioufly cautious, adds Irenaus, were the Apostles and their Followers, not to hold any Conversation with any that Corrupted the Truth; observing St. Paul's Rule, A Man that is an Heretick, after the first and second Admonition, reject. Polycarp's pious Mind was extreamly heated with a Zeal and Abhorrency of the poisonous Principles, which in those Times corrupted the Simplicity of the Christian Faith, infomuch, that when ever he heard any Thing of that Nature, he was wont immediately to stop his Ears, and cry out, Good God! To what Times haft then referv'd me, that I shou'd bear such Things? Immediately avoiding the Place where he heard it.

Not long after Anicetus was made Bishop, the Emperor A. D. Antoninus having compleated the 20th Year of his Reign, folemniz'd his fecond Decennalia. About which Time it An. Pii is believ'd Hegesippus took his Journey to Rome, where he stay'd several Years, till the Time of Bishop Eleutherins. He was a Jew by Birth and Education, but being converted to Christianity, he became a noted Author, and was the first who compos'd an entire Body of the Ecclefialtical History, which he divided into five Books, wherein he related the principal Occurrences hapning in the Church from our Saviour's Birth; till the Pontificate of Anicetus. This Book was written with Simplicity of Stile, because he resolv'd, says St. Ferom, to imitate the Phrases and Dialect of those whose Lives he wrote. We have only some few Fragments of this Work left, which are incerted by Eusebrus in his Ecclesiastical History. In the 22d Year of this Reign, the Emperor renew'd 150 some Laws against Adulterers, extending the same Punishments to Husbands as to Wives, for which this Prince

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An. Pii

is commended by St. Austin. About which Time 'tis probable that Melito the Apologist was made Bishop of Sardu, one of the seven Churches mention'd in the Revelation; being a Man of rare Parts and Abilities, whom Polycrates Bishop of Ephesus places among the great Lights of Afia, and stiles an Eunuch, upon the Account of his great Chastity and Sobriety, and whom the Orthodox accounted as a Propher. The following Year we find most remarkable for the Death of that Herefiarch Valentinus, and for the Impudence of Marcellina, a Woman of the An. Pii Carpocratian Sect, who coming to Rome about this Time, by her Arts and Industry much promoted that impious Herefie. She made use of her Wit and Beauty, to se-

duce the Orthodox by her lascivious Pleasures, which were too confistent with her Principles, and Tenets of her

Religion.

A. D.

160.

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23.

Capitol.

In the Year 161, the Emperor, after a long Train of Prosperity, was seiz'd with a violent Fever at Lorium: where finding himself sensibly decaying, he order'd his Friends, the Captains of the Guards, and his principal Officers to repair to him, and before them all confirm'd his Adoption of Marcus Aurelius, not naming Lucius Verus: And when the Tribune came for Orders, the Word which he gave him was Equanimity; intimating, That he had nothing more to defire, fince he had left so worthy a Successor, and immediately commanded the Golden Image of Fortune, which the Emperors always had in their Chambers, to be remov'd from his Apartment to that of Marcus Aurelius. Shortly after he dy'd; a Prince of admirable Virtues, and unstain'd Reputation, of whom it is said, That he never willingly shed the Blood of Roman or Foreigner; and in all his Acts. That he never did any 'Thing rashly in his Youth, or negligently in his Age. He dy'd on the 7th Day of March, under the Consulships of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, being 73 Years of Age, and having reigned 22 Years, 7 Months, and 26 Days.

A. D. 161. ANTO-NINUS PHI-LOSO-PHUS, the feventeenth Roperot.

Phis wife Prince in a true V. The Death of Antonians Pius was highly lamented in the City and Empire, and his Funeral solemniz'd with extraordinary Pomp and Splendor, Being attended and succeeded by divine Honours, publick Orations pronounc'd by his adopted Sons Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, a magnificent Pillar erected to him, and a new College of Priests instituted, call'd Aurelians, from the man Em- Name of his Family. At the same Time M. Aurelius,

the eldest and worthiest of the two, was without Opposi- capitol. tion admitted by the Senate as Successor and Emperor, Dion. who upon his Beginning to act, took his adopted Brother Verus as his Affociate and Equal in the Empire, and also took the Name of Antoninus. This was the first Time that Rome ever faw it self govern'd by two Sovereigns at once; a furprizing Sight to a City that formerly had her best Blood shed in chusing a Master, and so remarkable, that it occasion'd a new Ara to commence from that They were both of ancient and illustrious Families, Antoninus of about forty Years of Age, and Verus about 29; the former a Person of admirable Virtues and Accomplishments, of whom all Writers speak great and nobly, and the latter loofe and extravagant, dissolute and debauch'd in his Life and Morals. Aurelius or Antoninus was a renowned Stoick Philosopher, for which he is diffinguish'd from his Predecessor by the Name of Philosophus, as being a publick Professor of Philosophy, which he usually call'd His Mother, opposing it to the Court, which he call'd His Step-Mother; and for that Reason he frequently us'd that Expression of Plato's, That People was happy whose Philosophers were Kings, or whose Kings were Philosophers. In the twelfth Year of his Age he had enter'd himself among the Stoicks, wore their Habit, practis'd their Severities, study'd as they did, lay upon the Ground, and was with great Difficulty persuaded by his Mother to make use of an ordinary Couch; and according to their Precepts, he retain'd fuch Tranquility of Mind, that he is observ'd never to have chang'd his Countenance either with Joy or Sorrow. He was a Prince of eminent Juflice and Piety, and no less celebrated for his Care and Penetration: His Excellencies were fo shining and transcendent that Eutropius tells us, He was more to be admir'd, than commended; and it may be faid, That Providence proportion'd the Wisdom of this Emperor, to the Miseries and Calamities design'd for his Reign.

This wife Prince in a short Time set himself to the Regulation of the publick Affairs, and to the correcting such Faults as he found in the Laws and Government; in all which he shew'd so great a Respect to the Senate, that he remitted many Causes to them to judge sovereignly, and without Appeal; so that the People liv'd under his Government as in a free City. He was fully satisfy'd that the Sasety of a State depended upon a wise and honest Council; therefore he never undertook any Matter

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bited,

of Importance, without confulting the ablest Persons he cou'd find; and being free from that false Ambition of drawing others over to his Opinion, he gladly fubmitted to theirs, and often declar'd, That it was much more rea-Sonable for him to follow the Advice of so many wife Friends, than for them to follow his. And that he might remove that fatal Prejudice of esteeming it a mean and servile Thing for a Man to recede from his Opinion, he taught this important Maxim, That Man is no less free who lubmits to the Opinion of others, than he who continues obstinate to his own; such a Change being often the Perfection of Wisdom and Judgment. As he was ready to hearken to the Counsels of others, so he was no less careful in their Execution, often declaring, That an Emperor shou'd never act carelesty, or in Haste; wherefore he examin'd the meanest Affairs with the utmost Exactness, being perfuaded of this Truth, That Justice being throughout entire, there is nothing that concerns it but what is great. Upon which Account also he extended his Care to all Orders of Men, and no Person of any Condition whatsoever, appear'd to him unworthy of his Regard; but the Poor had never Recourse to him in vain, and he took such Pleasure in relieving them, that he look'd upon it as one of the greatest Happinesses of his Life, that he never wanted Means to perform it. In all Matters he was a religious Observer of his Word; and that he might never hearken to the Reasons of those false Politicians who maintain, That a wife and able Prince is not oblig'd to keep his Word, when it interferes with his Interest, be establish'd this memorable Instruction; Beware lest you esteem that Thing as advantagious, which will one Day confrain you to break your Word. So much Wisdom and Justice in a Prince cou'd not fail of a proportionable Degree of Religion, in which he follow'd the Dogmata of the Stoicks, which, as St. Jerom observes, in many Things come nearest the Christian Doctrines. But as there is a wide Difference between Christianity and Philosophy, so this Emperor was zealous of the Pagan Rites to the highest Decree of Su peritition; having been educated from his Youth in the Salian College, and gone through all the Offices in his own Person; imitating also Numa Pompilius, the chief Institutor of religious Ceremonies among the Romans, from whom he deriv'd his Original: And he was to find in his Way of Religion, that upon the Dies Nefafti, the in-

auspicious Days, when all publick Sacrifices were prohi-

bited, he then offer'd Sacrifices privately at Home; and he was the first that built a Temple to the Goddess presiding over Good-Turns, which perhaps was the only Virtue that the Romans did not then adore. Nor was this Emperor, in the midst of all his noble Excellencies, free from several Failures in Morality; being accus'd of too much Affectation and Reserv'dness, as well as Arrogance and Dissimulation; and notwithstanding his Scoick Principles, he is blam'd both for Incontinency, and for an unreasonable

Partiality to his own Family, and Relations.

The two Emperors Antoninus and Verus began their Reign with great Happiness and Prosperity; and the first Year was figualiz'd, or rather fully'd with the Birth of Commodus, the Imposture of Alexander, and the Persecution of the Christians. Commodus, afterwards Emperor, was the Son of Antoninus, and born on the 31st Day of August; but by Reason of his monstrous Life, and his Mother Faustina's immodest Practices, some Authors believ'd him to have been a fpurious Iffue, and begotten by a Gladiator. About the same Time the Impostor Alexander became celebrated in Paphlagonia; of whom we have a particular Account from Lucian, that witty Scoffer both of Christianity and Paganism, who flourish'd in this Reign. Alexander was a Person of a quick Wit. a fine Presence, and an extraordinary Talent of Persuasion. who having learnt from his Master, a Mountehank, a Secret to make Persons love, hate, &c. associated himself with one Cocconas of Byzantium, an expert Artist in Phy-These two, after they had deluded great Numbers of credulous People, refolv'd to fet up an Oracle among the Paphlagonians, whom they knew to be dull and fuperstitious; for which End they had two Plates of Brass in a Temple of Apollo, with an Inscription signifying that Esculapius and his Father wou'd soon settle there. Cocconas dy'd in a short Time, and then Alexander began to deliver his Oracles; and the better to delude the People. he bred up two large Serpents, so tame, that they wou'd fuck Women, and play with Children without hurt; and having finish'd this Project, he secretly convey'd a Goose's Egg with an inclos'd young Serpent, into the Foundation of the Temple then building, proclaiming in the Market Place, That the Town was bappy in the Birth of a God, and breaking the mysterious Egg, he declar'd, That he had found Esculapius. Shortly after he thew'd one of his great Scrpents, holding its Head under his Arm, to the Altonishment of

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the Spectators, who imagin'd it the fame that they had fately feen fo small; then he declar'd that this God would return Answers at certain Times, and defir'd that Questions might be sent seal'd; which he receiv'd, shut up in his Sanctuary, and deliver'd back again feal'd as he found them, after he had cunningly open'd them with a hot Needle, without Damage to the Impression. The Anfwers he gave were all dark and mystical, except such as related to Physick, wherein he was well skill'd; by which he obtain'd vast Sums of Mony, and kept several Officers under him. By his cunning Artifices he deluded the People into a perfect Adoration of him; and his Fame spreading in all Parts, he had afterwards Access to the Emperor Antoninus. As to the Persecution of the Christians, which began in the first Year of this Reign, some have plac'd it in this Year 61; but upon a full Consideration, we have plac'd it in the following Year, about 62 Years after the Beginning of the third General Persecution under the Emperor Trajan.

ell as their LivIII . I A. H. D. Slaves and List

From the Beginning of the fourth General Persecution of the Church, to the middle of the fifth General Persecution, under the Emperor Severus, and the Conclusion of the second Century.

Containing the Space of about 38 Years.

The Fourth General Persecution.

A. D.

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An.Ph.

i was rais'd against the Christians, which at different Places, with several Intermissions, and different Degrees of Severity, continu'd the greatest Part of his Reign; and this is call'd by most Writers, The fourth General Persecution, only some few, who place the fourth Persecution under Adrian,

Adrian, call this the fifth. Antoninus himself has been much excus'd as to this Persecution; Tertullian assures us that he made no Laws against the Christians, and Lactantius names him not among the Persecutors; and his shining Virtues would naturally lead us to believe him no Ways concern'd in it. Yet if we consider this Prince's Favours to the Philosophers, those profess'd Opposers of Christianity, his superstitious Zeal for Paganism, and his calling, in his Writings the Sufferings of the Christians, meer Obstinacy; we need not wonder if he countenanc'd their Enemies, took off the Restraints laid by his Predecessor's Decree, and encourag'd them to put the ancient Laws in Execution; which prohibited all Religions not approv'd of by the Senate. The Philosophers of Rome, among whom was Crescens the Cynick, were much corrupted, and had not liv'd up to their own Rules and Maxims, but were Guilty of many notorious Vices: These finding their Lives and Conversations expos'd, and even their best Morals clearly out shone by the Christians, us'd all Methods of Severity and Revenge, loaded them with all poffible Calumnies, and by Infinuations with the Emperors and the People, rais'd a new Persecution against them in the very first Year of the Reign. In this no Endeavours were omitted to cause the Christians to lose their Reputations, as well as their Lives; they caus'd their Slaves and Dependents to be tortur'd, in order to make them accuse them of fecret Grimes and Enormities, and that in their religious Offices; and the innocent Christians were forbidden to justifie themselves, and the World to read their Apologies; so that many suffer'd by Means of insuperable Prejudices. This Persecution did not rage so much in the Beginning, as afterwards, which occasion'd some to place it four or five Years after: And we find not the particular Names of any Martyrs in the first Year, besides a Woman call'd Glycerie, who is faid to have fuffer'd at Heraclia in Thrace, under the Governor Sabinus, on the 13th Day of May

God being highly displeas'd with the Infidelity of the Capitol, Romans, Ithis Persecution was attended with many de. Dien. plorable Difasters; particularly the River Tiber, by an Inundation overwhelm'd a considerable Part of Rome, bore along with it a Multitude of People and Cattle, ruin'd all the Country, and caus'd an extream Famine. This was leconded by Earthquakes, burning of Cities, and a genetal Infection of the Air, which immediately produc'd an 6 Dine fourth Perfecution under infinite

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infinite Number of Insects, which wasted all that the Floods had spared. At the same Time the whole World resounded with the Noise of Wars, which almost at once broke out from every Quarter; the Parthians, under the Conduct of their King Vologesus, surprix'd the Roman Legions in Armenia, and cut them in Pieces; the Catti invaded Germany and Rhetm, destroying all with Fire and Sword; and the Britains began to make dangerous Revolts. The Parthian War being of the greatest Importance, one of the Emperors was judy'd most proper for the Enterprize, and Verms himself undertook the Expedition, being accompany'd part of his Way by Antonium, who then left many wise and great Men to attend him, with a Design either of securing himself of his Conduct, or of laying a Restraint upon his A. D. Vices, which began too openly to appear. During his

An. Ph. Empire, apply'd himself to many Regulations, and took

particular Care in his Choice of wise Governors and Magistrates, being persuaded, That one of the greatest Errors in Government was to put the Magistracy into the Hands of unfit Persons; and therefore less the should fall into this Missortune, he with great Eastiness and Freedom, refus'd whatsoever was unjustly requested of him. He al-

ways gave Persons Encouragement answerable to their Merits, and plac'd them in Stations most suitable to their Capacities; being wont to fay, That the it was not in a Prince's Power to make his Subjects as he defir'd, yet he might always make use of their Service, by employing them in fuch Things as they understood. His excellent Admini-Aration fo much gain'd the Hearts of the Romans, that they offer'd him many peculiar Honours; but he wou'd not accept of any lofty Titles, nor permit Temples to be crected to him; being convinc'd, That Virtue alone made Princes equal to Gods, not the Applauses of the People; and that a King who rul'd juilly, had all the World for his Temple, and all good Men for his Priefts and Ministers. While Antoninus was worthily employ'd at Home, his Collegue Verus Abroad pursu'd his Pleasures, much more than the War he was carrying on; wherefore Antoninus, being made fensible of his Enormities, judg'd Mar-

A. D. riage the most probable Means of retrieving him; and 164. without Delay sent his own Daughter Lucilla into Syria, An.Ph. and bore her Company as far as Brandustum. Verus believing Antoninus was coming with his Daughter, and

fearing his Diforders shou'd be known to him, went to re-

ceive him at Ephelus, from whence he return'd shortly after his Marriage at Antioch with his new Empress, whose loose Life and Conversation prov'd agreeable to her Husband's, and to the Example her Mother Faustina had given her.

The same Year was noted for the Martyrdom of a ce- AGA ME lebrated Christian of Rome call'd Felicitas, with her seven Sons, Januarius, Falix, Philip, Silvanus, Alexander, Vita-lis, and Martial. The Pagan Priests represented to the Emperor, that it was necessary to appeale the Gods by making a Sacrifice of Felicitas, as we are inform'd by the Acts of her Martyrdom. Antoninus remitted this Affair to Publius, Prefect of the City, who finding this holy Woman brave and resolute, began with her Children: Januarius the eldest, after he was scourg'd with Rods, was pres'd to Death with leaden Weights; Falix and Philip had their Brains beaten out with Batoons; Silvanus was cast down headlong, and had his Neck broken; Alexander, Vitalis, and Martial were beheaded; and lastly, the Mother of them suffer'd with the same Sword. Besides these, we have an Account of the Martyrdom of Concordus, about the same Time, a Presbyter of the City Spoleto, who not only refus'd to sacrifice to Jupiter, but also spit on the Face of the Idol; for which he was first put to several Torments, and afterwards beheaded. These violent and A. D. unjust Proceedings did not at all discourage the great Ju- 165. stin, who returning to Rome, stood up couragiously for An.Ph. the Faith, and among others had frequent Contests with Crescens the noted Cynick Philosopher, who was not only proud and ill-natur'd, but a notorious Slave to all Vice and Wickedness. Tatian, then at Rome, gives him the Character of a Traducer of all their Gods, the Epitome of Superstition, the Accuser of Heroick Actions, the Conpriver of Murthers, the Prompter of Adultery, a Pursuer of Wealth even to Madness, who tho' he pretended to despise Death, yet did most dread it, and to which, as the greatest Evil, he sought to betray both Justin and Tatian. for their freely reproving the vicious Lives of those philosophical Impostors. This Man, an excessive Lover of popular Applause, by all the base Arts of Infinuation endeavour'd to traduce the Christians, and to represent their Religion under the most infamous Character. But in all his Disputes Justin found him wretchedly ignorant of Chriflianity, and strongly bias'd by Malice, which he offer'd to make good in a publick Disputation before the Empefor and Senate; affuring them, That either be had never

consider'd the Christian Doctrines, and then he was worse than the meanest Ideots, who never pronound'd Sentence in Matters unknown to them; or if he had, it was manifest, That either he had no Knowledge of them, or out of a base Compliance with his Auditors, diffembled it for fear of being . accounted a Christian, and incurring the Fate of Socrates, whose excellent Principal was, 'No Man was to be regarded before the Truth. This free and impartial Cenfure did extreamly exasperate Crescens, who not long after found

Means to bring about his Ruin.

Capitel. Dien.

In the mean Time, the Lieutenants of Verus successfully carry'd on the War against the Parthians, put Vologefus to Flight, took Artaxata and Seleucia, burnt and plunder'd the famous Cities Babylon and Ctefiphon, and demolish'd the magnificent Palace of the Parthians. These Wars continu'd four Years with great Variety, and much Bloodshed, 'till the Valour of the Romans prevailed, so as to become entirely victorious. But these Troops who had gain'd fuch noble Victories, and defeated Armies of 400000 Men, in their Return were oblig'd to encounter Sickness and Famine, which destroy'd more than half their Numbers. However this was no Impediment to the Glory of Verus, who readily assum'd the lofty Titles of Parthicus, and Armenicus, as if he had justly acquir'd them in the midst of his Debaucheries; and upon his Return to Rome, partook of the Honour of a solemn Triumph with Antoninus. His

A. D. 166. Return was thought fatal to the Empire, for he carry'd the An.Ph. Plague into all the Provinces through which he pass'd, and

caus'd the Infection to spread throughout all Italy and the Roman Empire, to the Destruction of infinite Numbers of all Ranks and Qualities. We are told that this dreadful Pestilence began at the taking of Babylon, or rather Selencia, where the Soldiers pillaging the Temple of Apollo, in a Place under Ground found a little Coffer, which upon their opening of it, cast forth a horrible infectious Air, which spread it self, and carry'd Mortality through most Parts of the World; a Story much afferted by the Zealots for Paganism, and the false Deities. This Plague was follow'd by many other Calamities, as Earthquakes, Famines, Inundations, and Caterpillars, in Italy, and other Provinces; all which had fuch deplorable Effects; that it is generally acknowledg'd, that if the extraordinary Vigilance and Wildom of Antoninus had not been a Means for preventing it, the Roman Empire had been then torn afunder by loglor) the

the barbarous Nations, who taking Advantage from these Miseries, made Invasions and Irruptions even into Italy it felf main som is

The Miseries and Calamities then befalling the Roman Empire, have by many Writers been look'd upon as Supernatural Judgments for the Persecution of the Christians, which in this Year grew hotter than ever before in this Reign, which has occasion'd several to date its Beginning from this Time. It appear'd most violent at Smyrna As. Pol. in Afra, from which Church we have an excellent Letter, giving a lively Account of the Martyrdom of several, but especially of the renowned Polycarp Bishop of the Place. This Epistle, which was written shortly after, tells us, That all Men were furpriz'd at that Greatness of Mind, that admirable Patience, and that Love to Jesus Christ which appear'd in the Martyrs; who when their Bodies were to torn with Scourges that their inmost Veins and Arteries were laid open, endur'd all without a Sigh or a Groan, a plain Evidence that their dear Master stood by and supported them. Those who were condemn'd to the wild Bealts, being kept long in Prison, sustain'd many cruel Torments; being oblig'd to lye upon sharp Spikes plac'd under their Bodies, and tormented divers Ways; that if it were possible, the Tyrant by the Length of their Sufferings, might have brought them to deny Christ. These perfever'd to the last, and in the Presence of the wild Beafts; for the brave Germanicus strengthned those who fear'd, by his Patience, and fought gloriously with the Beafts. And when the Proconful wou'd have perfuaded him to spare himself, in Consideration of his Youth, he pull'd the wild Beaft to him, and provok'd him, longing to be foon deliver'd from a wicked and unjust World. Upon which the whole Multitude of Spectators admiring at the invincible Courage of the pious Race of Christians, cry'd out, Destroy the Impions; Let Polycarp be sought for! There following a great Fumult upon these Clamours, Quintus the Phrygian, feeing the wild Beafts, and other design'd Tortures, became dispirited, and at sength gave way to a Defire of faving his Life. This Quintus, with some others, as the Epistle observes, had rashly of their own accord put themselves upon the Trial; but being apprehended, gave all Men a fignal Example, that none ought to precipitate themselves into such Dangers without good Warrant from the Gospel.

The

The great Polycarp hearing he was fought for, was no ways diffurb'd, but refolv'd to fland the Shock; 'till his Friends knowing his fingular Benefit to the Church, prevail'd with him to withdraw into a neighbouring Village. where with a few Companions he continu'd Day and Night in Prayer, interceding with Heaven for the Peace and Tranquility of all the Churches in the World, according to his usual and pious Custom. Three Days before his Apprehention being at Prayers, he fell into a Trance, and thought he faw his Pillow under his Head all on Fire: which he told his Friends was a prophetick Prefage, That he shou'd be burnt alive for the Cause of Christ. In the mean Time, being narrowly fought for, he retired to another Village, whither his Enemies follow'd him, and feizing upon two young Men, they fore'd one by Torments to confess the Place of his Retreat. Polydarp was laid upon a Bed in an upper Room, and the upon sufficient Notice of their coming he cou'd eafily have escaped to another Place, yet he refus'd, faying, The Will of the Lord be done. Understanding his Perfecutors were there. he came down and faluted them with a very chearful Countenance; informed that those that knew him not before, admir'd to behold a Person so truly venerable, of so great Age, and so compos'd a Presence, and that there needed such Diligence to apprehend one old Man. He, nothing concern'd, order'd a Table to be spread, furnish'd it with Provisions, and invited them to eat, and only requested for himself that he might have one Hour for Prayer. Which being granted, he betook himself to his Devotions, and being replenish'd with divine Grace, continu'd praying two Hours together, earnestly recommending to God the Case of all his Friends and Acquaintance, small and great, noble and ignoble, and the State of the Catholick Church throughout the whole World, to the Admiration of all that heard him; so that many of the Soldiers began to repenethat they were come out against so holy and divine an old Man, His Prayer being ended, they fathim upon an Afs, and conducted him towards the City; being upon the Road he was met by Herod the Irenarch, and his Father Nicefles, who took him into their Chariot and by plaufible Infinations fought to undermine his Constancy, asking hims What ill there was in calling the Emperor DO+ MINUS, and facrificing, by which he might escape Puinflomence Polycarp at first returning no Answer; and at last refusing to comply, they turn'd their seeming Kindness

Chap. III. ANT. PHILOS. the 17th Rom. Emp. 491

nto Scorn and Reproaches, and thrust him out of the Chariot with so much Violence, that his Thigh was bruis'd with the Fall. Whereat nothing daunted, as if he had receiv'd no Hurt, he chearfully hastned to the Place of his Execution under the Conduct of his Guard; and being arrived there, after a confus'd Noise and Tumult among the Multitude, a Voice from Heaven was heard by many, but none seen who deliver'd these Words, Be couragious, Polycarp, and quit thy self like a Man! Which cou'd not but remind him of that glorious Promise made to him by Jesus Christ about 70 Years before, Rev. 2. 10. Be thou saithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.

Polycarp being brought before the publick Tribunal, a great Shout was made, all rejoicing that he was appre-hended. The Proconful, whose Name was Statius Quadratus, demanded of him, Whether he was Polycarp? which being confess'd, he began to persuade him to recant; Regard, faid he, thy great Age, Swear by the Genius of Cæsar, repent, and fay with us, Take away the Impious; the ufual Terms and Proposals made to oblige Christians to deny their Faith. The holy Man looking about the Stadium, and beholding the Gentile Multitudes, with a fevere Countenance wav'd his Hand to them, look'd up to Heaven, and with a Groan cry'd, Take away the Impions. Proconful still persuaded him to swear, and to blaspheme Christ, promiting to release him; which Motion drew from Polycarp this generous Confession, Fourscore and fix Years I have ferv'd him, and he never did me any Injury; how then shall I now blaspheme my King and my Saviour? And when the Proconful still urg'd him to swear by Casar's Genius, he reply'd, Since you are so vainly ambitious that I (hou'd fwear by the Emperor's Genius, as you call it, as if you knew not who I am, hear my Confession, ' I am a Christian: If you defire a farther Account of that Religion, appoint a Day, and you shall bear it. The Proconsul advifing him to persuade the People, he answer'd, To you I obase to address my Discourse; for we are commanded to give to Princes, and the Powers ordain'd of God, all due Honour, and such as is not prejudicial to our Profession: As for the People, I think them not competent Judges, to whom I shou'd give an Account of my Faith. Upon this Quadratus berook himself to severer Arguments, and told him, That he had wild Beasts ready at hand to devour him, unless he won'd turn: The other desir'd him to call for them; for he was not at all dispos'd to turn from Good to Evil; it being

only honourable to turn from Vice to Virtue. The Proconful added, That since he despis'd the wild Beasts, unless he repented, he would use a more terrible Punishment to tame bim, which was Fire. To whom Polycarp return'd this Answer, Thou threatnest me with a Fire that burns for an Hour, and then dies; but art ignorant of the Fire of the future Judgment, and eternal Damnation, referved for the Ungodly. But why do you make Delays? Order what Punishment you think fit. This and much more he spake with Joy and Confidence, and a divine Grace was conspicuous in his very Looks, so that the Proconful himself was astonish'd, who sent his Cryer into the middle of the Stadium. to proclaim three Times, Polycarp had confess'd himself a Christian! Whereupon the whole Multitude both of Jews and Gentiles in Smyrna, with a Shout cry'd out, This is the great Doctor of Asia, and the Father of the Christians! This is the Destroyer of our Gods, who teaches Men not to facrifice, or to worship the Deities! After this they defir'd Philip the Afiarch, that he wou'd let loofe a Lion against him; but Philip excus'd himself because those Kind of Spectacles were already over, and not to be reaffum'd the fame Day. Upon which, they unanimously demanded, That he might be burnt alive, a Fate which he himself had prophetically foretold shou'd be his Portion. And the

This Proposal was no sooner made than executed, each Man striving to bear a Part in this Tragedy, with incredible Speed fetching Wood and Faggors from several Places, especially the Jews, whose Malice to the Christians was almost as natural to them, as for the Fire to butn. The Fewel being prepar'd, Polycarp unty'd his Girdle. laid afide his Garments, and began to put off his Shoes; Offices unufual to him, the Christians ambitiously striving to be admitted to do them for him, and happy the Person who could first touch his Body: So great a Veneration even in his younger Years had he obtain'd by his admirable Life and Conversation. The Officers having dispos'd all Things for his Execution, came according to Cultom to nail him to the Stake; which he defird them to omit, affuring them, That He who gave him Strength to endure the Fire, would enable him, without Naihing, to fland im-moveable in the hottest Flames. Upon which they only ty'd him, after which standing with his Hunds behind him like a Sheep delign'd for Slaughter, and a grateful Sacrifice to the Almighty, he pour'd out this following Prayer. O'Lord God Almighty the Father of the well beloved and ever-bleffed Son Jefus Christ, by whom we have receiv'd the Knowledge of Thee; the God of Angels, Powers, and of every Creature, and especially of the whole Race of just Men who live in thy Presence! I bless thy boly Name that thou hast vouchsaf'd to bring me to this Day, and to this Hour. that I may receive a Portion among thy bleffed Martyrs. and drink of thy Son's Cup, for the Resurrection to eternal Life, both of Soul and Body, in the Incorruption of the Holy Spirit, Into which Number grant I may be receiv'd this Day, as a fair and acceptable Sacrifice; as thou, the only true and faithful God, hast prepar'd, foreshewn, and now accomplished. For this, and for all other Benefits, I praise thee, I bless thee, I glorifie thee, through the eternal High-Priest thy beloved Son Jesus Christ; with whom to thee and the Holy Ghoft, be Glory both now and for ever, Amen. Which last Word being pronounc'd with an audible Voice, the Ministers of Execution blew up the Fire, which encreating to a mighty Flame, behold a Miracle, feen by those who wrote this Account, the Flames disposing themfelves into the Shape of an Arch, like the Sails of a Ship fwell'd with the Wind, gently encircling the Body of the Martyr, who flood in the midft, nor like fcorched Flesh, but like Gold or Silver purify'd in the Furnace; his Body fending forth a delightful Fragrancy, like Frankincense, or some other costly Spices. At length, when those impious Wretches faw that his Body could not be confum'd with Fire, they commanded the Executioner to stab him with his Sword; which being done, there came forth fo great a Quantity of Blood, as extinguish'd the Fire; which rais'd an Admiration in all the People, to confider what a Difference there was between the Infidels and the Elect. The Christians were desirous to have given his Body an honourable Burial, but were prevented by some, especially Jews, who prompted Nicetes to advise the Proconful not to bestow his Body upon them, lest leaving their crucify'd Master, they shou'd henceforth worship Polycarp. Whereupon his Body was order'd to be burnt in the Pile; nevertheless the Christians gather'd up his Bones, as a choice and inestimable Treasure, and decently interr'd them. In which Place they resolv'd, if possible, to meet annually, and celebrate the Birth-Day of his Martyrdom; both to honour the Memory of the Departed, and to encourage others to give the like Testimony to the Faith: Both which Confiderations gave Birth to the folemn Anniversary Commemorations of the Martyrs, generally observ'd in the Primitive

Primitive Church. Thus dy'd this Apostolical Man, Disciple of St. John, in an extream old Age, after he had been Bishop of Smyrna above 70 Years, and as some think, 86. Bishop Pearson and some Others, have several remarkable Arguments, to prove that his Martyrdom hapned under Antoninus Pius, in the Year 147; but Mons. Tillemont seems to us to have fully answer'd them, and to have prov'd, that it hapned in this Year 166, and on

Saturday the 23d of February.

To return from Smyrna to Rome, at the same Time the Persecution grew hot in that City; infomuch that the Champion Justin found it necessary to write a Second Apology for the Christians, it being about 16 Years after the Writing his First, and directed to the Emperor Autoninus and the Senate of Rome; tho' some by Mistake think it written in the last Reign, and directed to Antonivus Pin. The Occasion of it was this. A Woman at Rome had together with her Husband liv'd in all manner of Wantonness and Debauchery, but being at length converted to Christianity, she sought by all Arguments and Persuasions to reclaim him from this loose and vicious Course. But the' the Man continu'd obstinate and deaf to all Reason; yet by the Advice of her Friends, she still remain'd with him, hoping that Time might reduce him; till finding him grow insupportable, the procured a Divorcement from him. The Man was so far from being cured, that he was more enrag'd by his Wife's Departure, and accus'd her to the Emperor for being a Chriflian; the also put in her Petition, to obtain leave to anfwer for her felf. Whereupon he left the Profecution of his Wife, and turn'd his Anger against one Ptolemeus, by whom she had been converted to Christianity, whom he procur'd to be cast into Prison, and there a long time tortur'd, meerly upon his confessing himself a Christian. At length, being brought before Urbicus Prefect of the City, he was condemn'd to Death: Whereat Lucius, 2 Christian that stood by, cou'd not withhold from reprefenting to the Judge, That it was very unjust, that an innecent and virtuons Man, charg'd with no Crime, flou'd be adjude d to dye meerly for bearing the Name of a Christian; e Proceeding no ways reputable to the Government of such Emperors as they had, and of the august Senate of Rome. Which he had no fooner faid, but he was together with a third Person sentenc'd to the same Fate; Lucius thanking him, For delivering bim from wicked Governors on Earth, and Staitte

Apel. 7.

fending him to the Governor of Heaven. The Severity of these Proceedings awak'd Justin's Solicitude and Care for the rest of his Brethren, and he immediately drew up an Apology for them: Wherein he laid down a true and clear Narration of the Case, complaining of the Injuflice and Cruelty of fuch Procedures, to punish Perfons meerly for the Name of Christians, without ever accusing them of any material Crimes; answering the Objections usually urg'd against them, and defiring no more Favour, than that what Determination foever they 'sfrou'd make of it, his Apology might be put before it; that to the whole World might be Judge of them, when they had been once truly acquainted with their Case. This Apology was written in the Year 166, in which Year, Celadion Bishop of Alexandria dy'd, after he had held this Dignity in great Reputation about 14 Years: and was facceeded by Agrippinus, who continued in the See about 12 Years, being the ninth Bishop of Alexandria,

after the Evangelist St. Mark.

This Year proving exceeding terrible to the Romans, Capitol. the Emperor Antoninus, to put a Stop to all the threatning Dien. Mileries and Calamities, instead of regarding Justin's Apology made use of all Kinds of Paganish Methods. which he pursu'd with infinite Zeal and Superstition. He fent for Priests from all Parts to dispatch the innumerable Company of Sacrifices, vow'd and offer'd upon this Occasion; celebrated all the Sacred Foreign Rites that ever were known in Rome; purg'd the City all manner of Ways but the right; and exhibited the Solemnities call'd Lettis Terma seven Days together. So many Victims were flain upon this account, that some Men satyrically obferv'd, That if the Emperor return'd Victorious, he would find no Oxen left in all his Empire. Having perform'd all Ceremonies, Antoninus march'd against the Marcomanni and Quadi, taking Verus along with him; who had rather have flaid at Rome, to continue his Debaucheries, which Antoninus endeavour'd to prevent. The two Emperors A. D. took the Way of Aquileia, where they advanc'd towards 167. the Marcomann, beat them out of their Trenches, and An.Ph. made a great Slaughter of them. Vidorinus, Captain of the Guards, was flam in the Battel, with a great Numbertof his best Troops; but this did not hinder the two Emperors from pursuing their Advantage, pressing to forcibly upon the Enemy, that at last they broke through their Army; which occasion'd the greatest Part of their Sugard Allies

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Allies to flay the Authors of the Revolt, draw off their Forces, and defire a Truce. After which the Emperors again pursu'd the Enemy, overcame them in several Contests, defeated tham entirely, and return'd into Italy without any confident to Italy.

out any confiderable Loss.

Act. Justin.

And now the Time was come, that the great Justin, who had so bravely defended the Christian Religion, shou'd seal it with his own Blood; the Account of which we have from the Acts of bis Martyrdom; which are believ'd to be very ancient and authentick, tho' not fo certain as those of St. Polycarp. They inform us, That Juftin and fix of his Companions having been apprehended, were brought before Rusticus, Prefect of the City, who was a great Philosopher, and Tutor to the present Emperor Antoninus; who seeing Justin, persuaded him To obey the Gods, and comply with the Emperor's Edicts. pious Martyr told him, That no Man cou'd be justly condemn'd, that obey'd the Commands of Jesus Christ; and when the Governor ask'd him, In what kind of Learning, and Discipline he had been educated; he answer'd, That he had endeavour'd to understand all Kinds of Discipline, and all Methods of Learning, but had finally acquiesc'd in the Christian Discipline, notwithstanding its small Esteem among prejudic'd Persons. Wretch that thou art, faid the Governor, art thou then captivated with that Discipline? I am, reply'd the Martyr; for with sound Doctrine do I follow the Christians. And when ask'd what that Do-erin was; he answer'd, The true Doctrin which we Christians do profess, is this, We believe the one only God to be the Creator of all Things visible and invisible, and our Lord Jefus Christ to be the Son of God, foretold by the ancient Prophets, and who shall come to be Judge of all Mankind; a Saviour, Preacher, and Master to all those duly instructed by bim: That as for himself, he was too mean and unable to say any Thing becoming his infinite Deity; that this was the Business of the Prophets, who had many Ages foretold the coming of the Son of God into the World. The Prefect next enquired, Where the Christians were wont to assemble; and being told, That the God of the Christians was not confin'd to a particular Place, he ask'd in what Place Justin usually instructed his Disciples; who gave him an account of the Place where he dwelt, acknowledging, That he Preached the Christian Doctrine to all that referred to him. Then. having feverally examin'd his Co npanions, the Prefect thus address'd himself to Justin; Hear, thou who art noted

for thy Eloquence, and who thinkest thy self in the right; if I cause thee to be scourg'd from Head to Foot, dost thou think to obtain Heaven? He answer'd, Tho' he shou'd suffer what he had threatned, yet he hop'd to enjoy the Portion of all true Christians; well knowing, that the Divine Favour was laid up for all such, and shou'd be, as long as the World endur'd. And when again ask'd, Whether he expetted that Reward; he reply'd, That he did not only expect it, but he so certainly knew it, that there was no Room for Doubt. Upon this, the Governor without farther arguing, commanded them to go all together, and Sacrifice to the Gods. The Martyr declar'd, That no Man in bu right Mind, cou'd desert Truth, to embrace Error and Impiety; and when threatned, That unless they comply'd, they shou'd be tormented without Mercy; Justin added, They defired nothing more earnestly, than to endure Torments for the sake of Jesus Christ, and be saved; which wou'd add to their Happiness, and procure them Confidence at the dreadful Tribunal of their Lord and Saviour, before which the whole World must appear. To which the rest assented, crying, Dispatch us as you please, for we are Christians, and cannot sacrifice to Idols. Whereupon the Governor pronounc'd this Sentence; They who refuse to sacrifice to the Gods, and to obey the Imperial Edict, let them be first scourg'd, and then be beheaded according to the Laws. The holy Martyrs, rejoyc'd and bless'd God for this Honour bestow'd upon them; and being led back to Prison, they were accordingly fcourg'd, and afterwards beheaded; their Bodies being taken up, and decently interr'd by the Christians. And thus dy'd the celebrated Apologist and Martyr Justin, whose Writings have been justly admir'd in all Ages, tho' they were not wholly free from Errors.

Not long after the Death of Justin Martyr, in the A. D. 7th Year of Antoninus, Anicetus, after he had been 11 Years Bishop of Rome, dy'd, by Martyrdom according to An.Ph. fome; and was fucceeded by Soter, a Campanian of Fundi, Son of Concordins, a Person eminent for his diffusive Charity to distant Churches; who continued in the See about Engli. eight Years, and was the eleventh Bishop of Rome, after St. Peter and St. Paul. In the same Year dy'd Eros Bishop of Antioch, after he had held this Dignity about 26 Years; and was fucceeded by the famous Theophilus, a Person celebrated both for his Learning and Piety, who continu'd in this See about 13 Years, and was the fixth Bishop of Antioth after the Apostles. This was a remarkable Sea-

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fon for Learned Christian Writers; among whom Dionyfins, now Bishop of Corinth, was not the least noted; who not only took Care of his own Flock, as Eusebius observes, but also made the Christians of other Countries Partakers of his divine Labours, causing them to profit e-

very where by his Catholick Epistles, which he sent to many Churches; of which we have only fome Fragments remaining in Ensebius, which shew them to be as well Historical, as Instructive. Tatian was another eminent A. D.

Writer, who continuing still Orthodox, after the Death An.Ph. of Justin Martyr, kept up the same School for the Benefit of the Christians in Rome; among whose Scholars Rhodon was the most noted. And as Tatian follow'd his Master Justin's Steps in opposing the Gentiles, he also wrote a remarkable Treatife against them: 'Proving, that the Greeks learnt their Sciences from those whom they term'd Barbarians, and corrupted them besides; proceeding to the Explication and Defence of the Christian Religion, the Nature of God, of the Word, of the Refurrection of the Body, of the Freedom and Nature of the Soul, and of Devils, discovering the Snares they lay for Men; all the way mixing Satyrical Reflexions upon the Pagan Theology, and the corrupt Manners of their Gods and Philosophers; shewing that the Writings of Moses were more ancient than all other Histories, and giving an admirable Description of the holy Conversation of the Christians. This Work is very full of profane Learning, written elegantly, but not elaborately, and well digested. In this Year, Mons. Tillemont places the second Greek Version of the Old Testament after our Saviour's Birth, which was made by Symmachus, first a Samaritan and a Jew, then an Ebionite; who has taken great Liberty in his Translation, observing the Sense, and not keeping so close to the Words as Aquila did 32 Years before him.

Capitol. Dion.

160.

The two Emperors still continu'd the Wars with the Barbarous Nations in the North; and Winter being far advanc'd, they design'd to tarry at Aquileia till it was past, but the Plague obliged them to part from thence with some of their Forces; in which Journey Verus was seiz'd with an Apoplexy near Altinum, and dy'd shortly after, in the 38th Year of his Age, after he had reign'd almost nine Years with Antoninus. It is most generally thought that Poison was the Cause of his Death; which some attribute to the Empress Faustina, but the most to his Wife Lucilla, f

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Lucilla, being highly jealous of him for the Passion he bore to his own Sifter Fabia. Notwithstanding his infamous Life, Antoninus, out of a peculiar Kind of Goodness, Zeal for Paganism, and Respect to his own Family, caus'd him to be deify'd after his Death; tho' with no great Satisfaction, either to Senate or People.

. Antoninus, who before govern'd both an Empire A. D. and an Emperor, had now the former alone left to his Charge; and marrying his Daughter Lucilla to Pompeia- An.Ph. nus, he left Rome to finish the War with the Marcomanni, who joyning with the Quadi, Sarmatians, Vandals, and other barbarous Nations, became more formidable than Lucian. ever; so that the Wars against Hannibal and the Cimbri, carry'd not more Terror with them. The Emperor, who faw his Army wasted by Pestilence, and Losses sustain'd in former Encounters, and the Treasury exhausted by vast Expences, found himself surrounded with such Difficulties as he had never before experienc'd. He was constrain'd to remedy the first Misfortune, by listing the Gladiators, the Banditti of Dalmatia and Dardania, and the Slaves, which had never been practis'd but in the fecond Punick War; and the latter, by following the Examples of Nerva and Trajan, and selling the Moveables belonging to the Empire. Before the first Battel, the Impostor Alexander had the Confidence to send some few Verses to the Emperor in the Nature of an Oracle, intimating, 'That if he threw two Lions into the River Ifter, with Arabian Sweets for a Sacrifice, he shou'd be 'victorious and happy: Which Antoninus out of Superstition obey'd; but with so little Success, that he lost above 20000 Men in Battel, and was purfu'd to the very Walls of Aquileia. But this Affront so rowz'd the Fury and Courage of the Romans, that in a short time they repuls'd these formidable People, drove them into Pannonia, and so harrass'd them with repeated Attacks and Skirmishes, that they were constrain'd at length to receive such Articles as the Emperor thought fit to impose upon them.

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About this Time, Melito that excellent Writer and Bishop of Sardis, formerly mention'd, finding the Christians feverely and unjustly treated, presented an Apology to the Emperor Antoninus, of which we have only a Fragment in Eusebius: Wherein he intreated the Emperor, that he wou'd vouchsafe to examin the Accusations alledg'd against the Christians, and cause the Persecution to cease, H 2

500 Cent. II. Ecclefiastical History. Book III.

Cle. Al.

171.

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II.

Enfeb.

&c.

by revoking the Edict publish'd against them: Represent-'ing to him, That the Christian Religion was so far from being destructive to the Roman Empire, that it was very much enlarg'd fince the Propagation thereof; that this Religion was persecuted only by wicked Emperors, such as Nero and Domitian; that the Emperors Adrian and Antoninus Pius had written several Letters in its Behalf; and therefore he hop'd to obtain of his Clemency and Generosity, the Favour he so earnestly requested. Champion wrote many other remarkable Pieces, of which we have only the Titles remaining; daily doing Service to the Church of God, which was continually attack'd, both by Pagans without, and by Hereticks within. For about this Time arose those Hereticks call'd Antitactes, or Opposites; as opposing one God against another; being a Branch of the Valentinians and Marcionites, who held abominable Principles; and taught, that Sin deserv'd rather Reward than Punishment, and accordingly wallow'd in all Kinds of Vices and Enormities. Not long after, Justin's Scholar Tatian, who had been so very serviceable to the An.Ph. Church, being swell'd with an extraordinary Conceit, fell from his Orthodox Principles, and leaving Rome, in Mesopotamia he joyn'd several of the Errors of Saturninus, Marcion, and Valentinus with his own, and form'd a new Sect, call'd by the Name of Encratites, or Continents; because these Hereticks condemn'd the Use of Marriage, as also of divers forts of Meats and Wine; pretending to lead a fober and austere Life. They celebrated the Sacrament only with Water, instead of Wine; for which they were fometimes call'd Hydroparastates, and Aquarians; and affirm'd that our Forefathers were damn'd. This Sect spread it self through Pisidia, Cilicia, with Asia Minor and Greece, and as far as Rome, Gaul and Spain; infomuch that many eminent Men afterwards thought fit to write against it. It had several Branches, particularly the Severians, founded by Severus, who rejected the Epistles of St. Paul and the Acts of the Apostles; and the Apotactites, and Cathares, who renounc'd all the Riches and Conveniencies of this World, call'd themselves Apostolicks, and damn'd all others that posses'd them. About the Beginning of these Encratites there arose two other sorts of Here-

> ticks; the Adamites, a Branch of the Carpocratians, formerly mention'd in the Year 130; and the Alogi or Alogians, in Asia Minor; so call'd because they deny'd the Divine Aby , and the Gospel and Writings of St. John,

which do infift fo much upon it, attributing them all to

the Heretick Cerinthus.

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Thus was the Church of God afflicted with divers He-Eufeb. resies, even in the midst of Persecution; and the Devil, &c. who feem'd to have us'd all his Arts in attacking it with Libertinism, now particularly thought of surprizing it by an appearing Sanctity, and uncommon Austerities; which he carry'd on by means of Montanus, a Person born at Ardaba, a little Village in Mysia in the Confines of Phrygia. Pride, and an immoderate Ambition first betray'd him; at which Breach Satan having enter'd, took possession of the Man, who acted by the Influence of an Evil Spirit, was wont on a sudden to fall into Enthusiastick Fits, and Ecstatick Raptures, which caus'd him in a frantick Manner to pour out wild and unheard-of Things, and to Prophesie in a Way and Strain hitherto unknown to the Church. His first Proselytes were his Country-men the Phrygians, whence his Sect deriv'd the Name of Cataphryges; whom he instructed in the Arts of Evil-speaking, teaching them to reproach the whole Christian Church, for refusing to acknowledge his Pseudo-prophetick Spirit; the same Spirit on the contrary pronouncing them Blesled, that joyn'd themselves to this new Prophet. Among the rest of his Disciples, two Women were especially remarkable, Prisca and Maximilla, whom he first corrupted, and then imparted his Demon to them, whereby they were immediately enabled to utter the most frantick, incoherent and extravagant Discourses. Montanus laid his Scene with all imaginable Subtilty; for in the Foundation-Principles of Religion he agreed with the Catholick Church, entirely embrac'd the Holy Scriptures, and pretended that he must receive the Gifts of Divine Grace extraordinarily conferr'd upon him; which he gave out, were more immediately the Holy Ghost. Then he made a fingular Shew of some unusual Rigours, and Severities in Religion, gave Laws for more strict and frequent Fasts than the Orthodox us'd, forbad all second Marriages as Fornication, allow'd of Divorces, prohibited his Followers to avoid Martyrdom, and Excommunicated them for the least Crime; call'd Pepuza and Tymium, two little Towns of Phrygia, by the Name of Jerusalem, that he might the more plaufibly invite unwary Profelytes to flock thither. And the more to oblige fuch Persons as might be serviceable to him by the Proposals of Profit, he us'd all Methods of extorting Mony from his deluded Follow-H 3

ers, especially under the Notion of Gifts and Offerings; for which purpose he appointed Collectors to receive the Oblations that were brought in; with which he maintain'd Under-Officers, and paid Salaries to those who propagated his Doctrines about the World. His Followers proclaim'd him the very Comforter promis'd by our Saviour, added many other Notions and Practices, infected the Church longer than any other Hereticks before them, and were divided into many Sects and Branches, as we shall

have occasion to take notice afterwards.

Capitol.

172.

11 12.

Lefeb. Epiph.

In the mean Time the Emperor Antoninus, having brought the barbarous Nations to some Cessation, return'd to Rome with great Honour, where he celebrated his Decennalia according to Custom, and made such Vows as were usual upon fuch Occasions. During the Peace, he apply'd A. D. himself to a farther Regulation of the Laws and Policy: An.Ph.

And first, he ordain'd that no Enquiry shou'd be made into the State and Condition of deceas'd Persons after five Years; and lest Crimes shou'd go unpunish'd, and private Persons suffer by Delays in Processes, he increas'd the Number of Court-Days. That those who were Free-born might eafily prove it, he ordain'd, that each Roman Citizen shou'd enter what Children they had born, in the Temple of Saturn, where the publick Records were kept. He provided for the Security of Minors and Pupils, by constituting a particular Prator, call'd Tutelaris; and reform'd that Law which order'd those Curators call'd Letoriæ to be given to Minors, in Case of Lunacy, or Extravagancy. He moderated the Publick Expences, lessen'd the Number of Shews and Sports, and reform'd all the Abuses of Sales and Usury. He took so much care to hinder unlawful Marriages, that he dissolv'd that of a Lady of Quality, who had been marry'd to her Uncle several Years. To put a Restraint upon the Luxury of the City, he prohibited the Use of Litters and Chariots to all private Persons; and endeavour'd by all Methods to correct the Loosness and Disorders of Young Persons of both Sexes, without knowing it was his own private Interest: For he was in a great measure ignorant of the Wantonness, and Irregularities of his own Empress Faustina. These and many other excellent Regulations were made by him, fufficiently denoting both the Greatness of his Capacity, and the Piety of his Intentions.

In the Time of these Regulations flourish'd several Chri-Itian Writers, as Pinytus, Philippus, Modestus and Barde-

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fanes; all mention'd by Eusebius. Pinytus was Bishop of Gnossius in the Island of Crete, who wrote an Epistle to Dionysius of Corinth, very learned and eloquent, shewing at once a most profound Knowledge in Divinity, and a most tender Care over that Flock with which God had intrusted him. Philippus was Bishop of Gortyna in the fame Island, who wrote a particular Treatife against the Heretick Marcion, as likewise did Modestus. But Barde-Sanes was still more remarkable, a Native of Mesopotamia, A. D. and an Inhabitant of the City of Edella; who being of excellent Parts and Abilities, compos'd two Tracts in Sy- An.Ph. riack, translated into Greek by his Disciples; the first against Marcion, and other Hereticks; and the second con-cerning Fate, which he dedicated to the Emperor Antoni-Besides which he wrote other Treatises, upon the Persecutions then rais'd against the Christians in Syria; and couragiously withstood the Emperor's Friend Apollonius, who advis'd him to deny that he was a Christian, undauntedly replying, That he did not fear Death, which was still unavoidable, the hou'd answer the Emperor's Expectations. But about this Time, this Man adorn'd with fo many Virtues, fell into Heresie, suffering himself to be infected with the Errors of the Valentinians; inventing new Æones, and denying the Resurrection of the Dead. He acknowledg'd indeed the Law and the Prophets, together with all the New Testament; but then he admitted feveral Apocryphal Books along with them, fo that he became the Author of a new Herefie, his Followers being call'd Bardesanestes, who still added other Errors to his. He left a Son behind him call'd Hermonius, who compos'd several Books, that were afterwards refuted by St. Ephrem of Edelfa.

In the mean Time the Marcomanni, who only defign'd A. D. to lay the Emperor afleep by their Submission, all took up Ams with greater Fury than formerly; being fo much the An.Ph. more formidable, because they had drawn over to their Side all the Nations from Illyricum to the farthest Parts of Gaul. Antoninus soon undertook an Expedition against Dien. them, having first begg'd the Gods Affistance by Prayers Capitol. and Sacrifice; and arriving at Carnutum, he pass'd the Terini. River Danube by a Bridge of Boats, gain'd Advantages of the Enemy in feveral Encounters, burnt their Barns and Houses, and receiv'd several of the chief of their Allies; who aftonish'd at the Suddenness of his Victories, came in to submit themselves. But the most memorable En-

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gagement

gagement was among the Pannonian Mountains, on the North of the Danube; which might have prov'd fatal to the Roman Empire, had not some miraculous Accident interpos'd, which much redounded to the Honour of the Christian Religion. It was begun by the Enemy's Slingers cross the River Granus, who brought Antoninus himfelf into some Danger; but the Romans being rowz'd by the Affront, furiously pass'd the River, fell in with the Enemy, and made a great Slaughter. The Enemy timely retired with no little Policy, and rightly judging that they shou'd be pursued, left several Companies of Archers, cover'd with some Horse, to skirmish with the Romans, as tho' they intended to stop their Progress. Whereupon the Romans advanc'd with more Bravery than Conduct, an usual Thing after Success, and briskly attack'd their Archers; who according to Orders immediately fled, and cunningly drew the whole Roman Army among scorched barren Mountains, where they were fuddenly block'd up on every Side. But they not apprehending the Danger, and imagining their Courage invincible, continu'd fighting notwithstanding the Disadvantage of the Place; which caus'd more of them to be flain than of the Enemy, who stood upon the defensive, being not willing to leave that to Chance, which they expected from Delay. The Romans cou'd not conceive the Reason of this Conduct, till the excessive Heats between the Mountains, great Weariness, Wounds, and a violent Thirst had entirely disheartned and confounded them; at which Time they found, that they cou'd neither fight nor retreat, and that they must either suffer themselves to be cut in Pieces, or become a Prey to their barbarous Enemies. In this deplorable Extremity, where Rage and Despair were principal Attendants, Antoninus more concern'd at his Soldiers Miseries than his own, ran through all their Ranks, and in vain endeavour'd to raise their Hopes by performing Sacrifices. in which they no longer now confided. When the Sun had exhausted all their Strength, they perceiv'd their Enemies ready to attack them; and having no Expectation either from their own Courage, from Fortune, or their Gods, nothing was heard but Groans and Lamentations, nothing feen but the blackest Marks of the most horrible Desolation. But just as the Army was ready to be destroy'd, God was pleas'd to deliver them by means of a fudden Fall of great Quantities of Rain, with which the languishing Soldiers were relieved by holding their Mouths,

Helmets and Bucklers up to Heaven. And while the

Barbarians

Barbarians attack'd them in that Posture, making them swallow their own Blood mingled with the Water; the fame Clouds that had fent so kind a Shower upon the Romans, at the same Time discharg'd a terrible Storm of Hail, accompany'd with Thunder and Wild-Fire against the Enemy. So that while the former refresh'd themselves, and quench'd their Thirst, the latter were exceedingly scorch'd and confounded with the amazing Flames from Heaven, which neither their Water, nor their own defign'd Wounds cou'd extinguish. This caus'd many with their Wives and Children to furrender themselves to the Romans, to receive the Benefit of this miraculous Shower. These were treated with great Clemency by the Emperor; but the Soldiers, more enrag'd at the Affront they had receiv'd, than affected with the Danger they had escap'd, cut in Pieces all that made Resistance, put the rest to

flight, and took great Numbers of Prisoners.

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The Substance of this memorable and miraculous Deliverance is sufficiently confirm'd both by Christian and Pagan Writers; who unanimously ascribe it to the Power of God. Some of these Writers liv'd almost in the same Age, all of them before Learning was funk; so that we ought not to dispute their Authority. Dion Cassius has given us a particular Account of it, and ascribes it to some divine Power affifting the Emperor; tho' he confesses that some had attributed this falutary Storm to the Enchantments of one Arnuphis an Ægyptian Magician; which Opinion is deservedly expos'd by his Abridger Xiphilin, because the Emperor was never addicted to Magick, and declares as much in his Meditations, That he had learn'd of Diognetus, never to give Ear to fuch fort of Fooleries. Other Heathen Writers, as Capitolinus, Themistius, and Claudian, ascribe it to the Prevalency of the Emperor's own Prayers; of whom Themistius puts this Prayer in his Mouth, O Lord, the Giver of Life, I implore thy Affiftance, and lift up these Hands to thee, which were never stain'd with Human Blood. The Care that the Pagans took to carry off the Honour of this miraculous Event, ferves at least to confirm the Truth of the Fact. And without Fear of being thought too credulous, or endeavouring to Support the Christian Religion by Fable and Falshood, Artifices it never needed, we shall affirm, That there is no Reason to reject the Testimony of the Writers of those Times, who possitively assure us, That the Captain of the Guards having inform'd the Emperor, That God deny'd nothing

nothing to the Christians, of whom many were in the Legion of Melitene, a City of Cappadocia, and that he ought to try if their Prayers wou'd procure that Deliverance which he con'd not otherwise expect: The Emperor order'd they shou'd be call'd together; and that they all at the same Time did with Success invoke the only true God, whom the Winds and Storms obey, and who had often deliver'd his Servants by fuch extraordinary Interpolitions. Antoniwas being too just to stifle the Miracle, immediately wrote to the Senate of Rome in Favour of the Christians, and order'd their Accusers to be punish'd with Death; a convincing Proof that he thought this Affiftance owing to their Pray-Tertulian appeals to these Letters within twenty six Years after, in a folemn Apology in behalf of Christianity, which he durst not have done, had not the Thing been past Dispute. The Mistake about the Thundering Legion, the spurious Letter now remaining, and the Additions made to this Story in after Ages, can do no real Prejudice to the truth of the History it self. For the Reader's farther Satisfaction we refer him to the ingenious Mr. Wotton's Notes at the End of his Life of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius.

A.D. 175.

14 15. Capitel. Valca.

By a constant Series of Victories, Antoninus in no long Space brought these barbarous People to an entire Submis-An.Ph. fion; which was scarce effected before he was disturb'd with the News of the Rebellion of Cassius a hardy General, who proclaim'd himself Emperor in Syria, and passing for a Descendent of the ancient Cassius, like him pretended, If the Gods wou'd but favour the right Side, to restore the Commonwealth of Rome. He was very successful at first; but afterwards declining, he was brought into Discredit with his own Soldiers, and at last having been Emperor rather in Imagination than Reality, he was flain three Months and fix Days after his Revolt. His Head was fent to the Emperor, who commanded it to be honourably bury'd, and forrowfully declar'd, That they had depriv'd him of the great Pleasure of giving Cassius his Life, and of conquering his Ingratistude, by his own Generofity. This Clemency was admir'd by some, but one took the Liberty to tell him, That Cassius wou'd not have been so generous, had be been Conqueror; to whom the Emperor reply'd, We never serv'd the Gods so ill, or reign'd so irregularly, as to fear Cassius cou'd ever be Conqueror. Having testify'd his Grief for his Death, he continu'd his design'd Journey to the East, to cause the People and Army to return to their DuII.

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ty. Arriving in Syria he was met at Antioch by many Kings and Potentates of the East; and the first Thing he did was the Burning of all Letters found in Cassiu's Clofet, lest he shou'd be constrain'd against his Inclinations to hate any Person. Removing from thence into Ægypt, he pardon'd all the Cities that had join'd with Cassius, and left one of his Daughters at Alexandria, as a Pledge of his Friendship. Coming to Pelusium, he there corrected many Excesses and Debaucheries at the Festivals of Serapis: and where ever he pass'd, he enter'd the Temples, the Schools, and all publick Places, and instructed the People, conversing familiarly with them, and explaining to them the greatest Difficulties in Philosophy, leaving the Marks of his Wisdom in all Places. In this great Journey, the Empress Faustina was unexpectedly seiz'd with a violent Distemper, and dy'd at the Foot of Mount Taurus, towards Winter. Her loose and wanton Life had been a great Scandal to her high Place, and Dignity; yet Autoninus either from his Ignorance of her Crimes, or his Pasfion to her Person, willingly admitted of those great and unreasonable Honours which the Senate, out of Complaifance and Flattery, decreed to her Memory. And after the Example of his Predecessor Antoninus Pius, he founded a Society of young Virgins, whom he bred at his own Expence, and call'd them Faustinians; and likewise built a Temple to his Wife in the Town where she dy'd: Which Temple had afterwards a remarkable Chance becoming the Divinity that prefided there; it being consecrated to Heliogabalus, the notorious God of Impurity.

After a full Re-establishment of Peace in the East, the Emperor began his Journey towards Rome; and arriving at Smyrna, he there made some considerable Stay, and conferr'd many Favours. From thence he went to Athens, and being a Zealot in his Religion, was there initiated in the grand Mysteries of Ceres, call'd the Elensinian Mysteries, which was folemnly forbidden to all wicked Persons. and Men of ill Reputation. Here he did many Honours to the Inhabitants, and establish'd in their City Professors of all Sciences, with munificent Penfions; making them noble Presents, and granting them large Privileges and Immunities. From hence he took Shipping and return'd to Rome, where upon December the 23d, he triumph'd for his Victories in Pannonia; and to grace his Triumph, he join'd his Son Commodus with him, declar'd him Augustus; thereby invelting him with all the Honours of a compleat

A. D.

176.

An.Ph.

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16.

Cent. II. Ecclesiastical History. Book. III. 508

Partnership, which Verus before enjoy'd. In this Year, and 16th of Antoninus, dy'd Soter, after he had been eight Enfeb. Years Bishop of Rome, and was succeeded by Eleutherus, a Grecian of Nicopolis, Son of Habundius, and once Deacon to Anicetus, who continu'd in the See about fifteen Years, and was the twelfth Bishop of Rome, after St. Peter and St. Paul. About the same Time that eminent Light of the Church, Apollinaris Bishop of Hierapolis, deliver'd to the Emperor an excellent Apology for the Christians; in which it is believ'd that he infifted upon the Emperor's miraculous Deliverance two Years before. This Author wrote several remarkable Pieces against the Pagans, Jews, and Montanists; but of them, as of his Apology, we have nothing remaining but their Titles.

A. D. 177. An.Ph. 16 Enfeb.

. The Christians had met with Ease and Respite from their Miseries for two or three Years after the miraculous Deliverance of Antoninus; but notwithstanding the Clemency and Commands of that Emperor, the Governors and Magistrates in the Provinces took such Advantage from his Zeal and Religion, that the Persecution was reviv'd, and rag'd more fiercely than ever. These unhappy Times caus'd several Apologies to be presented to the Emperor, by eminent Christians, particularly Athenagoras and Miltiades. The former was a learned Philosopher of Athens, whose Works are still remaining; but we know nothing of the latter, but that he gave evident Proofs of his Skill and Abilities, in writing against the Gentiles, the Fews, and the Montamists; against which latter he maintain'd, 'That a Prophet ought not to speak in an Ecstacy or Fury; and in his Apology for the Christian Philosophy, dedicated to the Emperors, by whom are meant Antoninus and Commodus. Athenagoras in his Apology to the two Emperors, 'first applauded the Excellency of Antoninus's Government, and his Care and Tenderness towards his Subjects in General; only complaining of his Neglect of the Christians, and his abandoning them to the Fury of their Enemies. After which he refuted the three principal Calumnies alledg'd against the Christians, as, That they were Atheists, That they eat human Flesh, and That they committed horrible Crimes in their Assemblies: An-' swering to the first, That the Christians were not Atheifts, fince they acknowledg'd and ador'd one God in three Persons, and liv'd conformably to his Laws and

* Commandments, believing that he faw and knew all 'Things; Things; that they refus'd to worship Idols, and to offer Sacrifice to them, as being persuaded they were not Deities. He reply'd to the last Objection, by shewing that the Lives, Laws and Manners of the Christians were far from allowing Murther, and those infamous Crimes whereof they were accus'd. In this Apology he also treated of several of the Doctrines of Christianity, in all which he is suppos'd not to have been nicely Orthodox. Besides which he wrote a particular Treatise of the Resurrection of the Dead, 'in which he endeavour'd to prove, That the Thing was so far from being impossible, that

it was extreamly credible.

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We know not what Effect these Apologies had upon the Emperor; we only know that there was now great Occasion for them: For this Year the Persecution grew hot in many Parts of the Empire, especially at Lyons in Gaul, at the Time of some publick Festivals; of which we have a very lively, and affecting Account in a Letter from the Churches of Lyons and Vienna to them of Asia and Phrygia, written shortly after, as it is believ'd, by the Hand of Irenaus. This Letter tells us, it was impossible for Men to describe the brutish Fierceness and Cruelty of the Pagans, and the Severity of those Torments which the Martyrs fuffer'd, being banish'd from their Houses, forbidden to shew their Heads, reproach'd, beaten, hurry'd from Place to Place, plunder'd, ston'd, imprison'd, and there treated with all the Marks of an ungovernable Rage and Fury. Their Heathen Servants and Slaves were also tortur'd to oblige them to charge their Masters with Murther, Incest, and other abominable Crimes in private. These unjust Proceedings caus'd Epagathus, a young Man of admirable Piety, to remonstrate to the Governor of Lyons in Defence of his injur'd Brethren; upon which being ask'd, Whether he was a Christian? He confess'd it publickly, and was receiv'd into the Number of the Martyrs, being term'd by the Governor the Advocate of the Christians. Then others were diligently examin'd, who with all imaginable Chearfulness accomplish'd the solemn Confession of Martyrdom; only some few, about ten in Number, being unprepar'd and unexercis'd, thro' Fear and Frailty fell away, to the unexpressible Grief of the rest. From thenceforth the holy Martyrs underwent fuch Torments as were almost beyond Belief: But the whole Rage of the Multitude, Governor and the Soldiers in more violent manner fell upon these five, Pothinis the aged Bishop of the City, Sanctus a Deacon of Vienna, Maturus a Person lately baptiz'd, Attalus of Pergamus, and an admirable Woman nam'd Blandina. All were afraid of this latter, especially her own Mistress, by Reason of the Weakness of her Body; but Blandina was supply'd with such surprizing Strength, that those who by turns tortur'd her from the Morning'till Evening, became feeble, confessing themselves conquer'd, admiring that fuch a torn and mangled Body cou'd live, when one Sort of her Torments were fufficient to have ended her Life. But this bleffed Woman, like a couragious Champion, recover'd fresh Supples of Strength during her Confession; and it was a Refreshment, and an Abatement of her Pains, to pronounce these Words, I am a Christian, and there is nothing of Wickedness acted amongst us. As for Sanctus the Deacon, having at his Examination, in a more than human Manner endur'd his excessive Torments, he sustain'd them with that Courage, that he declar'd neither his Name, Condition nor Habitation, but to all Interrogatories answer'd, I am a Christian. Whereupon his Examiners clapt red hot Plates of Brass upon the tenderest Parts of his Body, which was all over full of Wounds, Stripes, and so bowed and drawn together, that it had lost the external Shape of a Man. And some few Days after, when the same Torments were reiterated, with defign to conquer him, or by his Death to conquer others, his Body by a particular Favour of God became frait, and he recover'd both his Shape and his Limbs. Several others were likewise tormented; among whom was a Woman nam'd Biblias, one of the Lapfed, but now recover'd. But when these Punishments were render'd ineffectual, they made use of Imprisonments in dark and noisom Places, where they were stretched in wooden Stocks, and left destitute of human Assistance; where some were suffocated, others dy'd of their Pains, and others triumph'd over all Miseries and escap'd.

But to crown all, Pothinus the Bishop was mark'd out, a venerable Person of 90 Years of Age, suppos'd to have been sent to Lyons by St. Polycarp from Rome. Age and Infirmities had render'd him so weak, that he could scarce move himself; but he had a vigorous Soul in a decay'd Body, and his earnest Desire that Christ might triumph in his Martyrdom, added new Life and Spirit to him. Being apprehended, he was haled along to the publick Tribunal, the Magistrates, Soldiers and Multitude following after with such loud Acclamations, as if our Lord him-

felf had been leading to Execution. Being ask'd by the Governor, Who was the God of the Christians? knowing it to be a captious Question, he reply'd, If you be worthy, you shall know. Hereupon, without any Reverence to his Age, or Respect to Humanity, he was drag'd up and down after a barbarous Manner, and unmercifully beaten, they that were near, kicking and striking him, and those at a distance throwing whatever they could find, as the Instruments of their Fury; by which means they thought to revenge the Quarrel of their Gods. At length being taken up from the Ground almost breathless, he was cast into the Prison, where two Days after he refign'd up his Soul to God. Not long after the four Champions, Maturus, Sanctus, Attalus, and Blandina, were brought forthamong the wild Beasts in the Amphitheatre, a Day on purpose being granted to the Multitude; where the two former did again undergo all Sorts of Torments, as if they had fuffer'd nothing before; being sometimes plac'd upon a hot Iron Chair, other Times drag'd and torn by the wild Beafts, and what soever else the enraged People were pleas'd to demand from above. These two Persons, after they had continu'd alive a long Time under the Sufferings of a glorious and mighty Combate, at last were slain; having been made a Spectacle to the City instead of the Combats of the Gladiators. But Blandina, being hung upon a Piece of Wood fixt in the Ground, was propos'd as Food for the wild Beasts; who by her strong and earnest Prayers redoubled the Ardour of the Saints, who in the Person of their Sister, seem'd to have a View of their crucify'd Lord. But when none of the wild Beasts would touch her, the was taken from the Stake, and cast again into Prison, being reserv'd for another Combate. Attalus being requit'd by the Multitude, was led round the Amphitheatre, with a Table carry'd before him, upon which was written in the Roman Tongue, This is Attalus the Christian: But when the Governor understood that he was a free Citizen of Rome, he commanded him back to Prison with the other Christians; and wrote to the Emperor Antoninus to know his Pleasure concerning him and the rest.

During this Intermission and Cessation, the holy Prisoners spent their Times in the highest Acts of Devotion and Charity, praying for their Enemies and Tormenters, and using all possible Means for the restoring, and comforting such as had shrunk from the Severity of the Persecution. Yet still they were so modest and humble as not

to affume to themselves the honourable Title of Martyrs, allowing it only to Christ himself, and those who had already suffer'd. Here they were replenish'd with spiritual Comforts, and what they wanted on Earth they receiv'd from Heaven: And whereas Alcibiades, one of the Imprison'd, who led an austere Life, feeding upon only Bread and Water, defign'd to continue the same Course in Prison, it was reveal'd to Attalus in a Vision, that Alcibiades did not well in declining the Use of God's Creatures, which would leave an Example of Scandal to others; whereupon Alcibiades submitted, fed indifferently on all Meats as he found them, and gave God Thanks. Shortly after the Emperor Antoninus return'd his Answer to the Governor, That those who confess'd themselves Christians should suffer, but those who renounc'd the Faith should be dismis'd; and the Time of a publick Solemnity being begun, when there was a numerous Concourse of all neighbouring Nations, the Governor order'd the Martyrs to be brought before the Tribunal, producing them as a pompous Shew before the Multitude. Being again examin'd, as many as were found Citizens of Rome, were beheaded, and the rest cast to the wild Bealts. And now Christ's Glory became conspicuous in those who formerly had fallen from the Faith, who contrary to Expectation became Confesiors; and being examin'd apart, they were added to the Number of the Martyrs. In the Time of their Examination, a couragious Phrygian Physician call'd Alexander, gave them fuch open Encouragement, that he was apprehended; and confessing himself a Christian, was condemn'd to the wild The next Day he was brought out into the Am-Beafts. phitheatre, together with Attalus, and together with him underwent all the Instruments of Torture, praising the Almighty, and at last resigning up their Souls into his Hands. Attalus in the midst of his Torments upon the hot Iron Chair, told the Multitude, That it was they that now fed upon human Flesh, and not the Christians, who did no Evil; and being ask'd what was the Name of his God, he reply'd, That God had not a Name as Men had. To finish the whole Solemnity on the last Day, Blanding was a third Time brought forth, together with Pontions, a Youth of 17 Years of Age, who continuing firm to the Faith, the Multitude were so enrag'd, that they had no Respect to the Age of the one, nor the Sex of the other, but expos'd them to all manner of Punishments, and made them pals through the whole Course of Torments. Ponticus, being

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ing encourag'd and strengthned by his Sister in Afflictions, after many exquisite Tortures, gave up the Ghost. At last, the incomparable Blandina, having like a valiant Mother supported her Children, and fent them before as Conquerors to the King, with Joy hastned to her Exit, as to her Nuptial-Feast. And having been scourg'd, tortur'd upon the Iron-Chair, and expos'd to the wild Beafts; and being insensible of all by reason of her familiar Converse with her Redeemer, she was at last slain with a Sword; the Pagans themselves confessing, that never any Woman among them fultain'd fo many and great Torments. Nor did the Enemy's Rage cease here, but began afresh upon the very Bodies of the Martyrs, of whom many were found dead in Prison, which were first cast to Dogs, and having for several Days undergone all manner of ignominious Usage, were at length burnt, and their Ashes swept into the River Rhosne; as if they were able to vanquish

Omnipotence, and deprive them of a Refurrection.

These Martyrs, with many others, of whom later Writers have given the Names of forty eight, suffer'd in the 17th Year of Antoninus, in the Month of August 177, according to Eusebius and many others; tho' Bishop Pearson supposes they suffer'd in 175, and Mr. Dodwell with some others, in 167; but Monf. Tillemont has given fuch convincing Arguments to the contrary, that we have follow'd his Account. Shortly after, a particular Account of their Enfeb. Sufferings was sent from the Churches of Lyons and Vienna, to those of Asia and Phrygia; to which were adjoin'd, the Epistles which several of the Martyrs, while in Prison, had written to those Churches, containing the chief Opinions of the Herefie of Montanus, which was then much promoted in Phrygia, by two Persons named Alcibiades and Theodotus. Nor did the Martyrs write only to the Asian Churches, but to Eleutherus Bishop of Rome whom some believe to have been a little infected with Montanism. These Letters were sent to Rome by the celebrated Irenaus, whom they persuaded to un-dertake the Journey, and whom they particularly recommended to Eleutherus by a very honourable Teltimony; defiring him to receive him, not only as their Brother and Companion, but as a zealous Profesior and ' Champion of that Religion which Christ had ratify'd with A. D. his Blood. After his Return, he was made Bishop of Lyons in the room of the Martyr Pothinus, succeeding An.Ph. him in a troublesom and tempestuous Time. But he was a wise and skilful Pilot; and Gregory of Tours tells us, VOL. II

that God gave such Essistacy to his Sermons and Discourses, that during his Government, he made almost all the City Christians. And others tell us, that he wrought several Miracles for the Conversion of Insidels; which is not improbable, since Irenaus tells us in his own Writings, that Miracles were frequent in his Time. Irenaus was a Grecian by Birth, and some think, an Inhabitant of Smyrna, educated and instructed both by St. Polycarp and Papias, two Disciples of the Apostle St. John, and most noted Bishops of Asia; and being made Bishop of Lyons, he became one of the most illustrious Desenders of Christianity, insomuch that several have call'd him an Apostolick Man,

and the Light and Glory of the Gallick Church.

About this Time it is believ'd that Lucius, a King of

Britain, having an Inclination for Christianity, which had been formerly planted, but not well water'd in that Nation, fent to Eleutherus Bishop of Rome, to fignifie his Pious Intentions, and to defire his Affiltance. Eleutherus fent Fugatius and Damianus, two eminent Men, to that Island; at which Time not only Lucius himself receiv'd the Faith, but by the Countenance of his Example, and the Diligence of the first Preachers, it spread in a short Time over all his Dominions. So that Lucius is suppos'd to be the first Christian King in the World, and Britain the first Province that embrac'd the Gospel by publick Authority; but Lucius and his Dominions being dependent upon the Romans, and confequently not supream, we must not look upon this as the FIRST ESTABLISH-MENT OF CHRISTIANITY BY HUMAN LAWS. About this Time also appear'd the Herefiarch Hermogenes, a Person better skill'd in Painting, than drawing Schemes of new Divinity; who forfaking the Church, fled to the Stoicks, and being tinctur'd with their Principles, was the first Christian that maintain'd Matter to be increated, and eternal, out of which God made all Things; and that all Evils proceeded out of Matter; from whence he and his Followers were called Materialists, They also

The Emperor Antoninus, after two Years Rest in the City of Rome, was now disturbed with the News of the Northern Nations taking up Arms again, and invading the Empire with great Success. This oblig'd him to make speedy Preparations to oppose them in Person, as he always did;

afferted, That our Lord's Body was lodg'd in the Sun; ridiculously interpreting that Passage, In them hath he set a Tabernacle for the Sun; and that the Devil and all the Demons should in time be dissolv'd into the first Matter.

Capitol.

Beda.

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and going to the Senate, this was the first Time he defir'd of them Mony out of the publick Treasure; which tho' in his own Power, he openly declar'd, That Emperors had no private Property to any Thing, not so much as to their Palace, in which they dwelt. After this, he marry'd his Son Commodus to Crispina the Daughter of Bentius Valens, a Consular Person; and then went to the Temple of Bellona, and perform'd the ancient Ceremony of the Javelin. The Romans, whose Love to this Emperor daily increas'd, before his Departure, assembled themselves before his Palace, beseeching him, Not to leave them, 'till be had given them some Precepts for their Conduct; that if the Gods should take him to themselves, they might tread in the same Paths of Virtue, wherein he had led them by his Example. The Emperor mov'd to fee their good Disposition, spent three whole Days in explaining to them the greatest Difficulties in Morality, and in giving them thort Maxims by which they might regulate their Actions. Shortly after, he march'd his Army towards the Enemy, A. D. with his Son Commodus, and gain'd great Advantages in a 179. War, that had not fewer Difficulties than the former. He An.Ph. fought leveral bloody Battels, where the Victories were always all owing to his Management; he boldly expos'd his Person, built many Forts, and persorm'd all Things that might keep their Country in awe.

Not long after the Emperor's Departure to the North, Agrippinus Bishop of Alexandria, dy'd on the 30th Day of January, after he had held this Dignity about 12 Years; and was fucceeded by Julian, who continu'd in the See near to Years, being the tenth Bishop of Alexandria after the Evangelist St. Mark. In this City was a famous Catechetical School for training Persons up in Divine Knowledge, and the first Principles of Christianity, which was founded, as it is believ'd, by St. Mark himself; and shortly after Julian became Bishop, the celebrated Pantanus became Governor of this School. This Pantanus was a Sicilian by Birth, and a renowned Stoick Philosopher, who had receiv'd his Christianity from the very Disciples of the Apolites; being highly esteem'd for his Piety, Wif-And whereas others before had difdom and Learning. charg'd the Duty of the Place in a more private Way, he made the School more open and publick, freely teaching all that address'd themselves to him; and that with so much Diligence and Dexterity, that both the School and City became famous in all Parts. His Care and Abilities

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much

much contributed towards the Advancement of the Christian Religion, which still suffer'd great Afflictions in many Parts of the Empire. For we hear of many Martyrs about this Time, as Epipodus, and Alexander, who suffer'd at Lyons; Benignus, at Dijon; Spensippus, and many others, at Langres; Androches, Thyrseus and Fælix at Saulien, near Autun; Sympovian and Florella at Autun; Severinus, Felician, and Exuperus, at Vienna; Marcellus, at Challon; Valerian, at Tornes; Cecilia, a Virgin, at Sicily; and Thraseus, a Bishop of Phrygia, at Smryna. We have the Acts remaining of some of these; but much corrupted, and not so authentick as many others.

Capitol.
Dion.
Herod.

Thus was the Church of Christ daily afflicted; but in the Beginning of the following Year 180, God thought fit to give it ease; at which Time the Emperor Antonimus fell into his last Sickness at Sirmium in Pannonia, being in his third Campaign against the Northern Nations. Here he found many Things to disquiet and disturb his Philosophical Temper, as his Conquests unsetled, his Enemies with their Swords in their Hands, and the People inclinable to revolt; but above all, the Youth and Unsteadiness of his Son and Successor Commodus, which caus'd him to declare, That he fear'd the Roman Empire would not be large enough to contain his Vices. Strugling with these Difficulties, and fluctuating between Hope and Fear, as his Death approach'd, he with great Tenderness recommended the Care of his Son to his principal Friends and Officers, and particularly charg'd them to make him fensible, That not all the Riches and Honours in the Universe, were sufficient to satisfie the Luxury and Ambition of Tyrants; nor their strongest Guards and Armies able to defend them from the Hatred and Insults of their Subjects. That no Tyrannical Princes ever enjoy long and peaceable Reigns, but only such as by their Clemency gain the Hearts of their People. That it was not they, who serv'd out of Constraint, but such as obey'd voluntarily, that would continue faithful in all Trials, and free from either Flattery or Treachery. And lastly, That it was exceeding difficult, and yet highly necessary for those Princes to set Bounds to their Passions, who had none to their Powers. Immediately after these Instructions, he was seiz'd with a Weakness, which took away the use of his Voice, and brought him to his End the next Day. Dion fays, that the Physicians, when he began to be indispos'd, poison'd him to ingratiate themselves with his Son, who was very eager to be freed

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freed from all Constraint. Thus dy'd Antoninus Philosophie, a Prince of profound Wisdom and Understanding, and no less shining Virtues; but those allay'd with such Paganish Superstition, as occasion'd innumerable Oppressions to Christianity, which is far above the most sublime Philosophy. But his Name will ever be plac'd among the best of the Heathen Princes, for his numerous and worthy Acts; which, as well as his excellent Meditations which he left behind him, may serve for noble Patterns of Morality, even to Christians themselves. His Death was infinitely regretted in all Parts; so that it seem'd as tho' the whole Glory and Prosperity of the Empire had dy'd with Antoninus. The Senate and People ador'd him before his Funeral, pronounc'd him a propitious Deity; and as if it had been an inconsiderable Thing to erect him a Golden Statue, and decree him divine Honours; they declar'd fuch Persons to be facrilegious, who had not in their Houses some Picture or Statue of the Emperor. He dy'd on the 17th Day of March, under the Confulships of Commodus and Annius Aurelius, being almost 59 Years of Age, and having reign'd 19 Years, and 10 Days.

V. Upon the Death of Antoninus, his Son Commodus A. D. was without Contradiction acknowledg'd as Emperor, first 180. by the Army, then by the Senate, and shortly after by the Com-Provinces. He was now almost 19 Years of Age; more MODUS noble by Descent than any of the former Emperors, the eighbeing the first that was born in his Father's Reign; but teenthRohe did not imitate his Father in his Moral Virtues and his peror. Philosophy, nor yet in those malignant Effects they pro- Herod. duc'd against Christianity. A few Days after his Father's &c. Death, he made great Promises of a just and regular Go. vernment, and for fome Space was willingly govern'd by the wife Directions of his Father's Friends: But being obnoxious to all Kinds of Flatteries, by reason of his Youth, he was foon led afide by defigning Men, and refolv'd to leave the Wars, and return to the Pleasures of Rome; notwithstanding the just Arguments of the wifest Counsellors, who unanimously advis'd him to see an End of this War himself. With this Resolution the Young Emperor wrote to Rome, advertising the Senate of his Coming; and for a present Ease and Security, he made a very halty, and some fay dishonourable Peace with the Enemy, which his Father had almost reduc'd to an entire Obedience. Then leaving a confiderable Force on the Frontiers, he fet for-13 of the series to a series

wards towards Rome; and in all the Cities through which he pass'd, he was receiv'd with incredible Joy and Solemnity, upon the account of his Father's Worth, and the Hopes conceiv'd of his happy Reign. At his Entrance into Rome, October the second, he was receiv'd in Triumph, with infinite Applauses and Bleffings by all Men, who strew'd the Ways where he pass'd with all Kinds of Flowers and Ornaments, shewing all possible Demonstrations of loy, and affuring themselves of a good and worthy Prince from the Son and Grandson of the two great Antonines. Nor were their Expectations immediately frustrated; for he continu'd near two Years with much Decency and Moderation, tho' not without some Tokens of a vicious Temper. The Poor Christians had of all others most Reason to rejoyce; for their Affairs were happily turn'd into a quiet and sedate Posture, and Peace encompassed the Churches throughout the whole World. In which Interim, the faving Word of God invited great Numbers of all Ranks to the Worship of the true Deity; fo that now many of those in Rome, who were very eminent both for Riches and Descent, did, together with their whole Families, betake themselves to the Faith, and became Christians.

Terini.

Eufeb.

Tho' the Church had so much Peace without, it was by Hereticks sufficiently disturb'd within; and now particularly by one Apelles, a noted Disciple of Marcion, who like him afferted two Gods; one Good, the other Bad; the latter Author of the Law, and the former of the Gospel. But afterwards he grew ambitious of being Founder of a new Sect, and fell in with a young Woman call'd Philumena, posses'd with an Evil Spirit, which she pretended was the Holy Ghost. He then admitted but one God, made up of infinite Parts, and allow'd Jesus only a Body of Air, which he distributed among the Elements as he ascended towards Heaven. He despis'd the Law and the Prophets, and a great Part of the New Testament, and deny'd the Resurrection of the Body, with many other Hereticks. About the same Time the Errors of Man-

181. Com.

Enseb.

ther Hereticks. About the same Time the Errors of Montanus became so general and triumphant in the Lesser Asia, that the Faithful of that Province thought sit to assemble at several Times, and divers Places about it: They carefully examin'd the Nature of this new Prophecy, pronounc'd it impious and prophane, rejected and condemn'd this Heresie, and Excommunicated all its Followers. The Synodicon takes notice of a Council held at Hierapolis by Apolinaris 1

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Apolinaris Bishop of the Place, who with twenty six other Bishops condemn'd and excluded from the Church those false Prophets, Moutanus, Maximilla and Theodotus. This was the first Council we find, after that held by the Apoftles at Jerusalem, in the Year 49. In the same Year. Theophilus Bishop of Antioch, one of the most vigorous Oppofers of the Hereticks, who had written both against Marcion and Hermogenes, now wrote an excellent Treatife against a learned Pagan call'd Antolycus, which is all we have have remaining of his Works. It is divided into three Books; 'confisting of great Variety of Learning and Reasoning, with which he clearly vindicated the Christian Religion against all the Exceptions of Antolycus and the Heathens; and demonstrated the History of Moses, was more ancient, and more true, than any a-'mong them; and that their Poets had borrow'd their principal Stories from the Holy Scriptures. He is obferv'd to have been the first Author that apply'd the very Word Trinity, to the three Persons in the Godhead. Not long after the writing of this Treatife, having been Bishop of Antiock about 13 Years, he dy'd; and was succeeded by Maximinus, who continued in the See about nine Years, and was the seventh Bishop of Antioch after the Apostles. Hegesippus dy'd at Rome, about the same Time; shortly after which, that Church was extreamly difturb'd by two Presbyters, nam'd Florinus and Blastus, who drew away many from the pure Faith. The former, a Disciple of St. Polycarp, fell into the Valentinian Heresie; and moreover maintain'd, That God was the Author of all Kinds of Evil; for which he was degraded from his Priesthood by Pope Eleutherus. Blastus forsook the Communion of the Church, and rather feem'd to have made a Schism, than form'd a Heresie; as is suppos'd from a Letter written to him by Ireneus, intituled, De Schismate.

The Emperor Commodus, had for a confiderable Space A. D. hearkned to his Father's Friends; but now being excited by the Levity of his Temper, and corrupted by the Examples of loofe Companions, he gave himself over to all Kinds of mean and extravagant Practices, regarding neither the Honour of his Family, nor the Dignity of his Hered. Office. He openly manifested his Lewdness and Incontinence, spending a great Part of his Time with his Associates at infamous Houses; and wasting Days and Nights in Feaflings, Banquetings, Bathings, and most abominable Luxury. Sometimes he was a Small-Ware Merchant,

A. D. 182, Com.

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10metimes

fometimes a Horse-Courser, sometimes an Archer, othertimes a Charloteer; he eat and drank with Gladiators, was subservient to common Prostitutes, and appear'd to be born rather for the most vile and infamous Uses, than for the Government of the World. These Actions, together with his Cruelties and Oppressions, gave Occasion to many confiderable Persons to form a Conspiracy against him, among whom his own Sister Lucilla was one; who envying the Greatness of the Empress Crispina, became Associate, unknown to her Husband Pompeianus. The Manner of it being determin'd, the Charge of the Execution was given to young Pompeianus; who was first to strike the Emperor, and the rest of the Conspirators to second and affist him. But his open and audacious manner of Proceeding, frustrated the Defign; for having had fufficient Opportunity of dispatching him, he insultingly held up his Dagger, crying, The Senate sends thee this; which gave some of the Guards time to seize him, before he cou'd strike the fatal Blow. This caus'd the Discovery of all his Accomplices; and Lucilla, Quintianus, Quadratus, and the rest of the Conspirators were executed, besides many other Persons, wholly innocent. These Executions were succeeded by those of his Empress Crispina, accus'd of Adultery, his Father's Cousingerman Faustina, and great Numbers of the most Illustrious of the Roman Nobility. He executed many innocent Persons, instead of others who were guilty, permitting Offenders and Criminals to escape for Mony; and if any defir'd to be reveng'd of an Enemy, by bargaining with Commodus for a certain Sum, he was allow'd to inflict Death, or any other Punishment. We are told feveral strange and monstrous Instances of his Cruelty; and his Tyranny increas'd so far, that at a publick Festival, fancying himself derided by the People, his impetuous Rage so transported him, that he gave Orders to massacre all the Multitude then present, and to burn the City; which had been executed, but that his Favourite Letus deterr'd him from it. His Cruelties indeed were much owing to his wicked Favourites, of whom Perennis was first, who was made his Captain of the Guards, and was no less notorious for his Avarice and Cruelty, than eminent for his Valour and Hardiness. During this Man's Authority, many Governments and Places were fold, many unjust Confiscations and Seizures were made, and many horrible Barbarities committed : Yet still the Christians escap'd, and

A. D. 184. Com.

were free from Persecution, having a greater Breathing-Time than in any of the latter Reigns; and Dion tells us, this was by the Mediation of this Emperor's beloved Concubine Marcia, who succeeding the Empress Crispina, in all Things but the Title, had the greatest Influence upon him; and favouring the Doctrine of the Christians, pre-

ferv'd them from Trouble.

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But still the Church met with new Troubles from He- A. D. refies and Hereticks, and now particularly from one Marc, one of the worst of Valentinus's Disciples, and no less remarkable for Magick than Herefie, by which he is faid to have caus'd Blood to appear in the Cup of the Eucharist. He took a special Care to seduce Women, and chiefly the Rich and Beautiful; under Pretence of making them partake of the Spirit of Prophecy, and of that great and heavenly Gift, of which he declar'd himself the Fountain. He got valt Sums from the Rich, and persuaded the Beautiful, that by consenting to his wicked Desires, they acted pioully, and were replenish'd with the Holy Ghost. Followers which were call'd Marcofians, were chiefly about the Rhossie in Gaul. They had an Initiation, which they distinguish'd from the Baptism of Jesus Christ, and call'd it a Redemption; and instead of a Trinity, they held a Quaternity, compos'd of Ineffability, of Silence, of the Father, and of the Truth. They affirm'd that Jesus suffer'd not in Reality, but only in Appearance: They eftablish'd two Principles, opposite to each other; held with Valentinus his Fancy of the Æones, and deny'd the Resurrection of the Body. They continu'd till the fourth Century, freely committing what Sins they thought fit, upon a Pretence of being more enlightned than St. Peter and St. Paul. And St. Jerom says, that by means of these People the Basilidian Heresie was spread through the greatest Part of Gaul, and carry'd also into Spain. In this Year 185, Monf. Tillemont places the third Greek Version of the Old Testament after our Saviour's Birth, which was made by Theodotion of Pontus, a Disciple of Tatian, then an Ebiunite or Marcionite, and lastly a Jew; who has taken somewhat more Liberty in his Translation than Aquila, but not so much as Symmachus did in the Year 169, being more exact than either, yet many Things are cut off, and Additions made to it, as Origen observes.

The Christians enjoy'd so much Freedom from Persecution, that we find but one Martyr of Note in this Reign, which was Apollonius, an illustrious Senator, eminent for his Philosophy, and other Parts of Learning;

185. Com.

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A. D. 186. Com.

Enfeb. Jeroms. who being accus'd of professing the Christian Religion. by his own Servant call'd Severus, was brought into the Judgment Hall before the Emperor's Favourite Perennis, then Captain of the Guards. The Servant undertook his Accusation in a very unseasonable Time for himself, for the Referent of M. Antoninus, which commanded the Christians Accusers to be punish'd with Death, being still in Force, Perennis condemn'd him first to have his Legs broken, and then to be executed. Then he earnestly exhorted Apollomius to renounce his Faith, and not to bring on his own Ruin; and finding him immovable, fince he was a Senator, he order'd him to give an Account of his Religion before the Senate. Accordingly he appear'd in a full House, where he made a learned and eloquent Apology for the Christian Religion; but norwithstanding that, he was condemn'd to be beheaded, because there was an ancient Law still in Force, which ordain'd, That those Christians, who were once judicially accus'd for their Religion, shou'd not be acquitted if they did not for-Not long after, the Senate, which had committed this Injustice against one of its Members, was severely punish'd by the unjust Deaths of many of the Senators; occasion'd not only by the Cruelties of Commodus, but also by the wicked Defigns of Perennis: By which Means Perennis became vallly rich and powerful; and well knowing the great Luxury and Neglect of Commodus, he began to endeavour to gain the Empire to himfelf, and had made some successful Progress in that great Attempt. But his Defigns foon became apparent to all Men, and the Multitude of Accusations against him at length rous'd the Emperor from his Lethargy and Blindness, so that both he and his Sons, who were fent into Illyricum to draw the Legions to revolt, receiv'd the just Reward of their numerous Villanies.

A. D. 187. Com.

Herod. Dien.

After the Death of Perennis, the Emperor undertook to repeal many of his Acts; but continu'd not long in that Regulation, pursuing his Pleasures, and suffering himself to be govern'd by another Favourite nam'd Cleander, a Person who for Cruelties, Rapines and Briberies exceeded Perennis. His ill Practices occasion'd new Plots and Conspiracies against the Emperor's Person, particularly by one Maternus, who practiting all Kinds of Robberies, gather'd together great Numbers of Banditti and Strangers, and wasted Gaul and Spain; and being thence repell'd, refoly'd to attempt the Empire it felf. But de-**Ipairing**

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leng spairing of attaining it by Force, he betook himself to Stratagems; and taking Advantage from the annual Solemnity kept in Honour of the Mother of their Gods, wherein it was lawful to imitate Magistrates or their Officers, he fent some of his Soldiers privately arm'd to mix themfelves with the Emperor's Guards, and there to affaffinate him. But his own Party, in Hopes of Advantage, dete-Eted him; and he and many others were executed. Not long after succeeded a dreadful Pestilence, accompany'd with a Famine; in which, as at many other Times, Cleander's Management became so insupportable to the People of Rome, that they took up Arms, and tumultuously march'd to Commodus, and requir'd to have his Head. And tho' the Emperor's Guards made some Resistance, yet at length the Torrent became so impetuous, that Commodus was constrain'd, tho' extreamly against his Will, to deliver up Cleander and his two Sons, to the Mercy of the Multitude. Commodus durst not punish this Tumult; but became fo fower and fuspicious of all Men, that he cast off all Care of State Assairs, giving ear to every malicious Informer, to the Ruin of many innocent Persons. No Men of Worth were admitted into his Presence, but being rul'd by loose and dissolute Persons, he fell into the Practice of all Kinds of Vice and Cruelty.

About these Times, the great Irenaus, who had long contended, and was best acquainted with the Principles of all the Hereticks, fet about that learned and elaborate Work Against Heresies, which he divided into five Books. In the first, he display'd the wild fantastick Notions of each Sect from Simon Magus to his Time, particularly the Valentinians and Marcofians: In the second, he refuted all their Principles, by those of common Sense and Reason: In the third, by the Writings of the Apostles: In the fourth, by the Words of our Saviour; and in the last, he explain'd several Passages of St. Paul, which the Hereticks had mistaken and abus'd. In all which he shew'd a great Variety of sacred and prophane Learning, and no less Skill in interpreting the Scriptures; retaining a great Number of Things, which the Disciples of the Apostles had taught by Word of Mouth. About the A. D. Time of the Appearance of this Work, Julian Bishop of 188. Alexandria dy'd, after he had held this Dignity near ten Com. Years; and was succeeded by Demetrius, a celebrated Man, who enjoy'd a long Possession of it 43 Years, and was the eleventh Bishop of Alexandria after the Evange-

his Bishoprick, some Indian Emissaries desir'd him to send

A. D.

180.

Com.

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along with them some worthy and excellent Person, to preach the Christian Faith in those Countries. None appear'd qualify'd for this Errand like Pantienus, Governor of the Catechetical School, as being a great Philosopher, and incomparably furnish'd with divine and human Learning. Pantanus, notwithstanding all the apparent Difficulties and Hardships, joyfully undertook the Mission; there being at that Time, as Eusebius informs us, many Evangelical Preachers, who inflam'd with a holy Zeal, in Imitation of the Apostles, were willing to travel up and down the World for enlarging the Bounds of Christianity. In this Journey we are inform'd, that he met with several of the Indians that retain'd the Knowledge of Christ, preach'd to them long fince by the Apostle St. Bartholomew; whereof not the least Evidence was his finding St. Matthew's Gospel written in Hebrew, which St. Bartholomew had left behind him, and which, St. Jerom says, Pantamus afterwards brought back with him to Alexandria. Upon his Departure from Alexandria, he was fucceeded in his catechetical School by the famous Clemens, usually call'd Clemens Alexandrinus, a Man of infinite Industry, who by his great Labours and Travels through the World, had gain'd a wonderful Skill in Philosophy, and all Parts of Learning both Human and Divine. Not long after his entering upon this useful Office of Catechist, he wrote that remarkable Piece intituled An Exhortation to the Gentiles, in which he learnedly and rationally refuted the ' Follies and Impieties of the Gentile Religion, and with the strongest Arguments and Inducements perfuaded ' Men to embrace Christianity. About the same Time there appear'd another eminent Christian in Alexandria, which was Ammonius, call'd Saccus, from his carrying Sacks of Corn upon his Back; who now quitting his Employment, betook himself to Study, and became one of the most learned and eloquent Men of those Times, a great Philosopher, and the chief of the Platonick Sect, and afterwards Master to the great Origen himself. Don and I

A. D. In the succeeding Year, Maximinus, Bishop of Antioch 190. dy'd, after he had been posses'd of that See about nine Com. Years; and was succeeded by Serapion, a Person noted for his Eloquence and Writings, who held that Dignity about 21 Years, and was the eighth Bishop of Antioch aspenies. The Apostles. In the same Year there appear'd two Here-

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fiarchs in Galatia, nam'd Selencus and Hermias, who did not only teach, with Hermogenes, that Matter was Eternal, and that the Body of Jesus was lodg'd in the Sun, but also that God himself was Corporeal, that Mens Souls were taken from the Earth, and created by Angels, and that there was no other Resurrection than the Generation of Children. They deny'd the Baptism of Water to be sufficient, but infifted upon that of the Holy Ghost and of Hire, and accordingly they stigmatiz'd those they baptiz'd with a hot Iron on the Forehead.

And now the Emperor Commodus wallowing in all Lamp. Kinds of gross Impieties and senseless Fooleries, tell into &c. new and unheard of Extravagancies, so as to reject his own and Father's Name, and instead of Commodus the Son of Antoninus, he commanded himself to be stil'd Hercules the Son of Jupiter; and accordingly he forfook the Roman and Imperial Habit, and in a ridiculous Manner clad himself in a Lion's Skin, and carry'd about a great Club in his Hand. With this strange Habit he appear'd in all Places, so that he became the Derision of some, and caus'd the Indignation of others; adding so many Executions and Cruelties, that he became a Moniter of Mankind. And as if Rome had not been sufficiently afflicted by having such a Governor, several other Calamities befel the City. About two Years before, the Capitol was burnt by Lightning, which likewise destroy'd the adjacent Buildings, and particularly the famous Libraries, which had cost the Ancients so much Care to collect. And now another Fire broke out, which consum'd the Temple of Peace, and the Temple of Vesta, laying open the ancient Image of Pallas to publick View, and then rag'd for feveral Days before it cou'd be stopp'd. The Temple of Peace was the largest and most beautiful Temple in the City, built by Vespasian, and besides its own magnificent Ornaments, many rich Men lodg'd their Treasures there for greater Security; so that this Fire impoverish'd many more besides those whose Houses were burnt. In this Year, and 12th of Commodus, Eleutherus, Bishop of Rome, dy'd, after he had held the Dignity about 15 Years; and was succeeded by Victor, an Asian and Son of Felix, a Person afterwards noted for his warm and violent Proceedings, who continu'd in the See about 10 Years, and was the thirteenth Bishop of Rome, after St. Peter and St. Paul. At this Time flourish'd Tatian's Disciple Rhodon, who wrote

many Pieces against the Hereticks, but none of them are

A. D. IQI. Com.

11 12. 526 Cent. II. Ecclesiastical History. Book III.

A. D. In the following Year Commodus having render'd himfelf 192. both odious and despicable, became so extravagant, that Com. he resolv'd to lodge in a Fencing School the Night before the Feast of Janus, from thence to issue out next Day, not as Emperor, but as a common Gladiator to sence naked between fore the People. Which strange Resolution being made

Emperor, but as a common Gladiator to fence naked before the People. Which strange Resolution being made known to his Friends, his beloved Marcia, his General Lætus, and his Chamberlain Electus, endeavour'd by all Methods of Persuasion to divert him from so mean and dishonourable a Design. But being provok'd, he commanded their Departure, and retiring to his Chamber at Noon to repose himself, he wrote down the Names of these three Persons in a Book, and defign'd them for Execution that Night, together with a great Number of Senators and rich Persons, whose Estates were to purchase him Security from the Soldiers. This Writing was accidentally taken up by a little Boy, who was met with it by Marcia; who viewing the fatal Contents, discover'd all to Lætus and Electus, who immediately refolv'd upon the Tyrant's Death, concluding upon Poison as the most fafe Means, which was speedily administer'd by Marcia her felf. This immediately cast him into a heavy Slumber, and Marcia to conceal all, caus'd the Company to retire, under Pretence of Reft; but finding him awake and vomiting, the and the rest of the Conspirators hastify call'd in a flout young Man call'd Narcissis, and by shewing him his Name in the black Lift, engag'd him to go in and strangle the Emperor. Thus dy'd Commodus, a Prince who, as Lampridius fays, liv'd only for his Subjects Mischief, and his own Shame; and dy'd on the 30th Day of December, being in the 31st Year of his Age; and having reign'd 12 Years, 9 Months, and 14 Days.

A. D.
193.
PERTINAX,
the nine-teenthRoman Emperor.
Hered.

Capitol.

VI. The Conspirators found means to carry the Dead Body through the Guards, and immediately repair'd to the House of Helvius Pertinax; and at Night persuaded him to undertake the Government of the Empire, carrying him to the Camp of the Pratorian Cohorts for that purpose. The Soldiers being deceiv'd with a Report that their Masser's Death was natural, readily comply'd with the Conspirators, and made Pertinax Emperor; and then being brought into the City, he was confirm'd by the Senate; which at the same Time sent an infinite Number of Curses and Maledictions against Commodus and his Memory. Pertinax was the Son of an enfranchis'd Slave, now 68 Years of Age, who had pass'd through many strange Changes of Fortune.

Fortune, and was branded for no remarkable Vice but Avarice, which was one Cause of his Ruin. He began his Government with the Restraining the Licentiousness of the Pratorian Soldiers, and their Infolencies and Injuries usually committed against the People in the late Reign. He banish'd Promoters and Informers, who again had crept into the State, and regulated many other Abuses and Diforders, tolerated in this Time; particularly, he fold most of the Buffoons and Jesters of Commodus, especially such as had obscene Names; and also exacted a strict Account of those Servants to whom that Emperor had been profuse in his Donatives. He entertain'd all Men honourably and courteously; by which, and other good Actions, he so gain'd the Hearts of the Senate and People, that they all accounted themselves happy, in having so worthy an Emperor. But the Pratorian Soldiers, too loose to be reform'd, foon took an insuperable Prejudice against him, upon the Account of his Frugality, and strict Discipline; and therefore endeavour'd to fet up some others against him, but with no fuccess. And now having a strong Suspicion, if not a certain Knowledge of the Murther of their beloved Patron Commodus, they became more inveterate, and withal so bold and insolent, that they resolv'd to use no more private Methods, but in an open hostile Manner to attack the Emperor in his Palace. In order to which, a confiderable Body of them was drawn out, who in a tumultuous Manner march'd through the Streets of Rome, with drawn Swords and other Weapons; and as their Motion was sudden and impetuous, they enter'd the Palace, with little or no Opposition. The Emperor refus'd to fly, urging, That such an Action was unworthy of his Dignity and past Deeds; and so facing his Soldiers, in hopes of daunting them, he soon met with his Death from their Hands. This hapned upon the 28th Day of March. after a short Reign of twelve Weeks and three Days.

The Soldiers after they had committed this execrable Julia-Fact, finding no Resistance, became superlatively Inso- NUS. lent, and proceeded to an unheard-of Piece of Arrogan- the twency, which was to fet the Empire to Sale, and give it to man Emthe highest Bidder. The Competitors were only two, Sal- perer. pitian and Julian; which latter obtain'd it of the Soldiers, Hered. but contrary to the Inclination both of the Senate and Spart. People, who were however constrain'd to comply with a Power which they cou'd not resist. This Julian was d through mony france Changes of

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Grandson to the famous Lawyer of that Name, who compos'd the Perpetual Edict in the Reign of Adrian, and about \$7 Years of Age, which he never cou'd exceed. For tho' he much endeavour'd to make himself popular, yet the Senate and People hated him, upon the Account of his scandalous Election; and the Soldiers themselves were also disoblig'd by his bad Pay, and his covetous Temper. These Circumstances gave an Occasion to the Commanders of the Armies abroad to aspire to the same Dignity; and accordingly three of them fet up for themselves, Pescennius Niger in the East, Septimius Severus in Hyricam, and Clodius Albinus in Britain. Severus lay the nearest to Rome, where Niger was most desir'd; but he by continuing at Antioch, instead of hastning into Italy, gave Severus Opportunity to get before him: For by crolling the mos with incredible speed, he got to Ravenna before any expected him. His Pretence for taking the Empire was, to revenge the Death of Pertinax, whose Name he assum'd, to do himself the greater Honour, upon his first being proclaim'd in Illyricum. Julian endeavour'd to make fome Resistance, but it did him no Service, his Courage and Management failing him; and when the Senare heard that Severus was near the City with his Army, they declard Julian a publick Enemy, and order'd him to be flain, upon the 2d Day of June, after a shorter Reign than his Predeceffor, being only nine Weeks and two Days. 2010 A 1

peror. Dien. Herod.

Spart.

by one Theodosse Horingin a Carrier of Langer of Byzast SEVE- Upon the Death of Julian, Severus was immediately ac-RUS, knowledg'd Emperor by the Senard and People as he the twenty drew near to the City, he fent Order to all the Pretorian for Ro- Soldiers to come forth and vreceive him un aim'd; which was accordingly obey'd, in hopes of pleasing and appealing him by their ready Obedience; for he had concealed his Defigns from all but a fews But upon their coming forwards with Laurel-Branches to pay him Homage, they were fuddenly furrounded by his Anny; and fo having reproached them with their barbarous and infamous Practices towards the Emperor and Empire the commanded them to be immediately stript of attacheir Military Habiliments, depriv'd them of the very Name and Honour of Soldiers, and banish'd them 100 Miles from Rome And behas with the Execution of some of the Ringleaders, he began his Reign, to the great Satisfaction of all Men This Emperor was by Birthan African, of the City of Leptin now about forty feven Years of Age; one who by his industry berfrore his famous Work call d Stromata; "which confilts

194. Severi

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Ver. II.

Chap. III. SEVERUS the 21st Rom. Emp.

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had attain'd to almost all Charges and Offices, wherein he purchas'd the Name and Reputation of a valiant, wife and excellent Commander. He was likewise commended for his Wit and Learning, his Prudence and Policy, and his Vigour and Hardiness; but justly condemn'd for his Pumick Craft and Diffimulation, his Treachery and Infidelity. and his Severity and Cruelty: In short, his Temper and Circumstances dispos'd him to the Performance both of the noblest Acts, and the bloodiest Severities. He immediately set about the Regulation of many Abuses in the City; and after thirty Days continuance, refolv'd to march against Niger, a formidable Rival, who had quietly posses'd himfelt of Byzantium, and all the East. There was Reason also to dread what Albinus might do in his Absence, who had declar'd for himself in Britain; therefore he sent to him, and offer'd him the Partnership in the Empire, with the Title of Casar; which was willingly accepted by Albimus, who esteem'd it a good Bargain to obtain that with Ease, which he defign'd to attempt by Force. And thus laying Albinus afleep, the World was divided into two Factions, and a War began, as severe as any in the former Ages of the Roman State, highly remarkable for the Valour of the Commanders, and the Number of the Forces.

During these Transactions and Revolutions, the Church Terral. at Rome began to be infected with a new Herefie, form'd Roiph. by one Theodotus, formerly a Currier or Tanner of Byzantium; who in the last Persecution, having out of Fear of Torments deny'd Jesus Christ, to vindicate his Apostacy, added Blasphemy to it; and with the Ebionites and Alogi, taught, that tho' our Saviour was conceiv'd by the Operation of the Holy Ghost, yet he was but a meer Man, only excelling others in Justice and Sanctity of Life. He had long lain hid at Rome; but afterwards employing what Learning he had, and having form'd a Sect call'd Theodotians, he was excommunicated by Victor Bishop of the City; and some say, condemn'd by a Council, together with a famous Disciple of his call'd Artemon. This Artemon had also many Followers, who holding almost the same Opinions, joyn'd with the Theodotians, and afterwards became a numerous and dangerous Sect. These very boldly and falfly afferted, That their Doctrin was continually held in the Church 'till the Time of Pope Victor; after which, A. D. they faid, it began to be corrupted, and the Truth of it question'd. About these Times, Clemens Alexandrinus Severi wrote his famous Work call'd Stromata; 'which confifts Vet. II. · of

of Miscellaneous Discourses, compos'd out of the Holy Writings, and the Books of the Gentiles; both explain-' ing and confuting the Opinions of the Greeks and Barba-' rians, the Sentiments of Philosophers, and the Notions of Hereticks; inferting Variety of Stories, and Treasures out of all Sorts of Learning: Which, as he himself tells us, he therefore stil'd Stromata, that is, A variegated contexture of Discourses; which he compares not to a curious Garden, where the Trees and Plants are dispos'd in exact Order, but to a thick shady Mountain, where Trees of all Kinds grow promiscuously together. He is suppos'd to have shewn somewhat too much of the Philosopher in this Work, and to have express'd some few Things not foundly or warily; yet capable of a candid Interpretation, and fuch as are often met with in the Writers of those early Ages.

Herod. &cc.

In the mean Time, Severus successfully proceeded in his Expedition against Niger in the East; and nothing cou'd withstand the rapid Fortune of this prosperous Prince. For whether his Butiness was perform'd in Person, or by his Lieutenants, he was equally successful. His Army first landed in the Lesser Afra, near Cyzicus, where they attackt, defeated and flew Amilian, and after that engag'd with Niger himself, whom they overcame in two Battels: The first was fought near Nice in Bithynia, a City very faithful to Niger's Interest; where his Army had been quite cut off, if they had not fav'd themselves by retreating into the City. The second was near the Bay of Issue, at the Straights of Cilicia, where Alexander the Great had formerly overthrown Darius; after which Defeat Niger made his Escape to Antioch, where finding himself not safe, he fled towards the Euphrates; but being vigorously pursu'd. he was overtaken by fome Soldiers, who cut off his Head. and carry'd it to Severus. This Emperor immediately gave Orders that Niger's Wife and Children shou'd be banish'd from Rame, and as a Conqueror perform'd his Pleasure upon the Vanquish'd, destroying without Mercy great Numbers who had joyn'd with Niger, and particularly demolish'd the great City Antioch, which had affisted his Adverfary. These Successes made Severus resolve to push forwards, and punish all those Eastern Princes who had ta-

A. D. 195. Severi ken part with Niger. The Parthians and Adiabenians had

fent in Men to his Affistance, and therefore he first attackt 3. them; and in an Irruption which he made into Parthia he took the City Nelibn, which he made the Frontier-Town

Town of the Empire on that Side. Whilst he was in Me-Sopotamia, he heard that Byzantium had at last furrender'd to his Forces. That City declar'd at first for Niger, and after he was dead, held out against Severus, and endur'd one of the sharpest Sieges mention'd in History. The Surrender of Byzantium made him absolute in the East, and

he doubted not but to be so shortly in the West.

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The Catholick Church, which had hitherto been at U- A. D. nity within it felf, was now in danger of a Schism, about 196. the inconsiderable Controversie of the Time of Keeping of Severs Easter; which was with great Violence reviv'd by Victor Bishop of Rome, who endeavour'd imperiously to impose English the Roman Custom of keeping it on the next Sunday after &c. the Jewish Passover, upon the Churches of the Lesser Asia, and all others who observ'd the contrary Usage. And because they did not yield, he rashly sent out his Excommunication against them; not only endeavouring, but, as Eusebius explains it in the following Words, actually proscribing and pronouncing them cut off from the Communion of the Church. The Afiaticks little regarding the fierce Threatnings from this Bishop, under the Conduct of Polycrates Bishop of Ephesus, stood their Ground; 'Justifying their Observing it upon the 14th Day after the Appearance of the Moon, after the Rule of the Jewish Passover; and this by constant Tradition, and uninterrupted Usage, deriv'd from the Apostles St. John and St. Philip, St. Polycarp, and several others to that Day. All which he wrote to Victor, but prevail'd nothing to prevent his rending the Church in funder. For the Composure of this unhappy Division, Synods or Councils were call'd in divers Parts of the World; as besides one in Rome, one in Palestine under Theophilus Bishop of Casarea, and Narcissus Bishop of Ferusalem, another in Pontus under Palmus, another in Corinth under Bacchillus, another in Ofdroene in the East; with many Bishops in other Places; who were very ready in their Endeavours to quench the common Flame; and tho' they agreed with Victor in the main Controversie, yet they all in their Epistles blam'd his Management; and advis'd him rather to mind what concern'd the Peace of the Church, and the Love and Unity of Christians among each other. But the most considerable of all was the excellent Irenaus, who as Eulebius obferves, in this Matter truly answer'd his Name, in his peaceable and healing Temper. For having conven'd a Synod in Gaul of 13 Bishops, after a full Debate of the Mat-K 2

SEVERUSIA

ter, he wrote a Synodical Epistle in their Name to Victor: Wherein he acknowledg'd the Agreement with him in the Controversie, but calmly and gravely advis'd him to beware how he excommunicated whole Churches, for obferving Customs deriv'd to them from their Ancestors: That there was as little Agreement in the Manner of the Preparatory Fast before Easter, as in the Day it self; some thinking they were to Fast but one Day, others two, others more; and some measuring the Time by a continual Fast of 40 Hours: And that this Variety was of long standing, and had crept into several Places, while the Governors of the Church, who took less Care about these different Customs, still maintain'd a sincere Love and Peace towards one another; a Thing practised by his pious Predecessors, particularly Anicetus towards Polycarp; who tho' they cou'd not fo far convince each other, as to lay aside their different Ulages, did yet mutually embrace, communicate together, and peaceably ' part from each other. This Father also wrote many other Epistles of the like nature to other Bishops, and probably with very good Effect; for the Asiaticks did not lay afide their Custom, yet it does not appear that the Union between them and the Bishops of Rome was thereupon discontinu'd. All continu'd their own Customs in all Places, 'till a full Determination was made of this Matter in the Council of Nice, 129 Years after. During these Disturbances in the Church, there were no

Herod. Spart.

less Disturbances in the State; for Severus, who particularly desir'd to be succeeded by his Sons Caracalla and Geta, found it high Time to remove Albinus, who daily increas'd in Strength and the Favour of the Romans. Accordingly, having setled all Things in the East, and demolish'd the great City of Byzantium, and given his Son Caracalla the Title of Cafar, he made use first of secret Methods to deftroy him, and afterwards of open War. At first Albinus had the Advantage; but at length Severus meeting him in Person near Lyons, February the 17th, after a most obstinate Fight routed his Army, and forc'd him to make his Escape. But that prov'd to no purpose, for he was foon kill'd, and his Head carry'd to Severas, who feat it erected upon a Pole in Triumph to Rome; whither also he return'd himself, after he had rais'd valt Sums of Mony by confiscating the Estates of the most considerable Men in Gaul. At his Return to Rome, he upbraided the Senate

with their Love to Albinus, and their Ingratitude to him;

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A. D. 197. Severi

and in Diffgrace of that venerable Assembly, he renew'd the Memory of the Tyrant Commodus, call'd himfelf his Brother, and on June the 2d, made him to be canoniz'd, and ador'd as a God. He also condenni'd to Death great Numbers of the Senate and Nobility of Rome, who had been Friends to Albinus or his Party; producing Letters against them, and alledging other Proofs and Reasons, of which some are suppos'd to have been forg'd. He us'd the like Severity to many eminent Persons of Niger's Party; and in this being incited by Avarice as well as Revenge, many considerable Ladies cou'd not escape his Fury.

The FIFTH GENERAL PERSECUTION.

In the midst of all this Blood and Cruelties, the Engle. innocent Christians, who had enjoy'd Rest for about 17 Terres. Years, were again afflicted and perfecuted; but at present neither by the Order, nor the Encouragement of Severus, who in the former Part of his Reign was very favourable to Christianity. He had been recover'd formerly out of a Fit of Sickness, by the Intercession of one Proculus Torpacie, a Christian, who anointed him with Oyl, according to the Apolile's Command, James 5. 14. and the Practice of the Primitive Church; so that he knew by Experience of how great Efficacy the Christians Prayers were with the Physician of all Men. And he was so sensible of this Benefit, that he fent for Proculus, who was Steward to Evoday his Son's Governor, and kept him in the Palace 'till he dy'd; and when some Romans of both Sexes, and of great Quality, were afterwards accus'd of Christianity, he acquitted and applauded them, and openly check'd the Madness of the People. His Court seem'd to be an Asyfum for Christians, for a long time; for his Son Caracalle's Nurle was a Christian, and when he was a Child, he express so great an Indignation at the Punishment of one of his Play-Fellows who stood up for his Religion, that he was not easily pacify'd. Besides, the Behaviour of the Christians towards Severus, was a great Inducement to him to be very favourable to them; for he who took no-fice of every Phing, cou'd not but see, that in all his Wars they never appear'd against him, neither joining with Niger nor Albanas: The Concerns of another Life were chiefly in their View, and they willingly left this World to those busie Men, who were ready to put every Thing and their ingrantude to him:

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into confusion to obtain it. But notwithstanding this Prince's Favour, the People's Fury prevail'd, especially in his Absence from Rome, so that a Persecution broke out, and was continu'd for five Years, before it was countenanc'd by the Emperor's Edicts; the Christians being profecuted by the Standing Laws of the Empire, which not only forbad all Religions not approv'd by the Senate, but also all Corporations and Societies not establish'd by the Imperial Power. The wonderful Progress of Christianity, the infinite Numbers of the Believers, with the many Miracles still perform'd by them, gave a mighty Jealousie to their Pagan-Adversaries; who loaded them with all kinds of Calumnies, and us'd all possible Methods to suppress The People, upon all publick Misfortunes, cry'd out to have the Christians cast to the Lions, upon Suppofition that they occasion'd all Calamities; and upon publick Festivals, they sometimes tore their Bodies out of the Graves, and cut them in Pieces. Many fuffer'd by Fire, by Sword, and by wild Beafts; and others after cruel Scourgings and other Torments, dy'd in Prison; and all without Complaint or Resistance, but with Joy and Thankfulness, for having Opportunity of glorifying their Master by their Sufferings. Tho' there were many Martyrs in the Beginning, yet we find not the Names of any 'till the Year 200.

Not long before this Perfecution, appeared that celebrated Champion Tertullian, the Son of a Roman Centurion of Carthage, where he was born and educated in the Pagan Religion. He had been brought up in all the Accomplishments which the Learning of the Greeks and Romans cou'd produce, but he was in a particular Manner skill'd in the Roman Laws; for which Reason some have thought him an Advocate. He was a Man of a most acute Wit. and a nice Inquisitor into all things; so that being convinc'd by the powerful and triumphant Efficacy of the Christian Faith above all others, in the Beginning of Severus's Reign, he forfook his Paganism, and was Baptiz'd; and for some few Years he continu'd the most renowned Professor, and the most shining Light in the Christian Church. He foon fet himself to write concerning that Religion he had undertaken, and publish'd four remarkable Pieces before, or about the Beginning of the Perfecution; namely, of Penance, of Prayer, of Baptism, and of Patience; and also two others about the Ornaments and Dreffes of Women, not long after. In all which, he shew'd him-

felf a rigid Censor, a strict Observer of Rites and Discipline, and a zealous Afferter of the most nice Severities of Religion; which Principles being at length carry'd too far, and with a stiff and violent Temper, brought him into Montanism, and other Errors, as we shall observe in its

proper Place.

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The Emperor Severus made no long Stay in Rome; for Herod. being ambitious of Honour, and defirous to be reveng'd Dien. of some Kings who had affisted his Enemy Niger, he with his accustomed Vigour and Celerity departed towards the East with a considerable Force. Arriving in Afia sooner than any could expect him, he immediately began the War in Armenia, threatning Barfemius King of the Atreni, who had been a particular Friend to Niger. The King of Armenia durst make no Resistance, but sent the Emperor Prefents, fued for Peace, and gave such Hostages as he requir'd. Whereupon this valiant Prince turn'd his Forces against Arabia Felix, where was then a Mutiny, and took and plunder'd feveral Cities; and from thence return'd against the Frontiers of the Atrem, and invested the City Aira, the Metropolis of that Country. But being unable to take it foon, by reason of its Situation and the excesfive Heats, he immediately took Water, and failing along the Emphrates, successfully landed in the Confines of the Parthians and Persians, who in his Absence had invaded the Empire. Here with wonderful Expedition, he took Celencia, Ctesiphon and Babylon, and plunder'd and wasted wherefoever he came; which was accounted the more fignal Conquest, because the Romans stood in greater Fear of the Parthians, than of any other Nation. In the same Year he made his Eldest Son Caracalla Partner with him in the Empire, gave him the Tribunitian Power, and the Title of Augustus, June 2. and he also gave the Title of Gafar to his Younger Son Geta, In this Year Tertullian tells as of a strange Appearance of a Figure of a walled City in the Air, in Judea, for forty Mornings successively; which the Wontanists and other Millenarians imagined to be the new Jernsalem, where they were to live happily a thousand Years.

In the Time of this strange Sight, flourish'd Narciffus Enfeb. Bishop of Fernfalem, the 15th Bishop of the Uncircumcia fion, from the Year 137, and the 30th from the Apollle St. James, a Person celebrated both for his Piety and his Miracles; particularly, for his changing Water into Oyl, in a Time of great Want. After he had been some few

A. D. 198. Severi

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A. D. Years Bishop, and of a most strict and exemplary Life, 199. some profligate Persons who fear'd to be censur'd and puserer nish'd by him for their Crimes, by Way of Prevention accur'd him of Incontinency; and to confirm their Accusa-

cus'd him of Incontinency; and to confirm their Accusations, they added both Oaths and Imprecations: The first wish'd to be consum'd by Fire, the second defired to be wasted with Leprosie, and the third to lose his Sight, if their Allegations were not true; which not with standing were not believ'd by the Faithful, because the whole Course of his Life had been unblameable. But Narciffus being unable to endure the Burthen of so great a Scandal, and being inclinable to a Philosophical Life, resir'd himself from his Church, and liv'd many Years in Solitudes, and obscure Fields. But the great Eye of Justice would not connive at what pass'd; and these wicked Men soon found the fatal Effects of their Imprecations: For the first was burnt in his House, with his whole Family; and the second was cover'd with that Disease which he had wish'd for; but the third, seeing the End of the two former, and fearing the just Vengeance of Heaven, publickly confess'd the whole Plot, and by daily pining and lamenting, and continual weeping, at length lost his Eye-fight. Upon the Retreat of Narciffus, the Church proceeded to the chusing another Bishop wand before his Return to Fernfalem, he had three leveral Successors, Pins, Germanio, and Gordius wolve flat adr or somere or is

A. D. The Persecution, which in a great Measure had been 200. confin'd to the City of Rome, within less than two Years Severi reach'd Africk and the City of Carrbage, where Vigilias

Saturninus was Governor, and the first in that Country that employ'd the Sword against the Christians. In which Place, we have an Account of the Martyrdom of Speratus, and twelve others, call'd by the Name of Scillitains, probably from the Place of their Habitation, who after a confiderable Dialogue with Saturninus, and a couragious Declaration of their Faith, were all condemn'd to be beheaded. These Severities towards the Christians, and the innumerable Hardships they sustain'd in all Places, rous d up the Spirit of the mighty Tertullian, and caus'd him to publish his famous Apology, which he dedicated to the Magiffrares and Governors of the Roman Empire: MWherein with incomparable Eloquence, Evidence and Strength of Reason he pleaded the Cause of the diffrested Chrifians; complaining of the Unreasonableness and Injustice of their Enemies, with all the illegal and irregular Methods

thods of their Proceedings; largely demonstrating both the Vanity, and the Falshood of the Crimes vulgarly charg'd upon the Christians, as their being guilty of Blood, Incest, Worshipping an Asse's Head, &c. Manifelting their Meekness and Innocency, their Temperance and Chastity, their sublime Piety to God, their inviolable Obedience to their Prince, the Soundness of their Principles, and the Sanctity of their Lives, beyond all possible Exception. By Way of Proof, he instanc'd in the Antiquity of the Books of Moses, the Predictions of the Prophets, the Authority of Pilate's Relation concerning Christ, and the miraculous Escape of Autoninus. And in the Conclusion he shew'd, that the Virtues of the Christians were much more excellent and sublime, than those of the Pagan Philosophers. Not long after he publish'd his two Books, To the Nations; which were almost of the same Subject with the Apology; in which the greatest Part of that is repeated, but put into another Order, and more enlarg'd. About the same Time he wrote his Scorpiacus, which was design'd for a Remedy against the Scorpion-Poison of those Hereticks who disfuaded the Christans from suffering Martyrdom. And to speak a Word in Season, he also wrote a most pathetical Treatife to the Christians in Prison, intituled An Exhortation to the Martyrs; wherein he powerfully incited them to Patience and Perseverance to the last Moment of Life. Besides these Pieces, he wrote about this Time a remarkable Treatife call'd, Of Prescriptions, against Hereticks: fo nam'd because it shew'd, that their Doctrines were not to be admitted, by Reason of their Novelty; for he obfery'd, That they could not reckon their Original from the Time of the Apostles, nor could shew a Succession of Bishops, from their Times, as the Catholick Church could. This Book was wrote particularly against Hermogenes, Marcion, Valentinus, with many others,

There never was a greater Occasion for writing against Clem. Herefies: For besides the several Hereticks formerly taken Torm notice of about this Time there appear'd the Docetes, and the Patripaffiant. The former were more ancient, against whom St. John St. Ignatius and St. Polycarp afferted the Truth and Mystery of the Incarnation, and they were a Branch of the Guofbicks. This Herefie was reviv'd about this Time by one Juliu Cassianus, one of the Valentinian Sect; and his Edlowers obtain'd the Name of Docetes. from doners to appear; because they believ'd and taught,

that the Actions and Sufferings of Jefus Christ were not in Reality, but only in Appearance. The Doctrin of the Patripassians was broach'd by one Praxeas, a Person of Asia of a turbulent Temper, as most Hereticks were; who upon the account of his suffering a short Imprisonment for Christianity, vainly attributed to himself the honourable Title of Martyr, and diffus'd the Poison of his Error both in Rome and Africk. At Rome he prevented Pope Victor from acknowledging the new Prophecies of Montanus, and caus'd him to revoke some Letters in Favour of that Sect. Here he taught his Heretical Opinions, and afterwards in Africk, where Tertullian oblig'd him to recant; but in a fhort time after he again publish'd his Doctrine, and taught, that there was but one Person in the Trinity; that the Father was the fame with Fesus Christ, who was incarnate, born of the Virgin, and suffer'd upon the Cross. So that his Followers who were at first call'd Praxeans, were afterwards call'd Patripassians, because they attributed the Passion to the Father himfelf.

Thus we have got over the Actions of two Centuries. over five General Persecutions, and into the midst of the fixth; in which the Church of God daily increas'd and became more and more triumphant, in spite of the Malice of all the Powers of Earth and Hell. 'And here it is remarkable, that besides the terrible Persecutions that harass'd the Church, and seem'd to tear it in Pieces, the Devil made use of three very subtle Methods to ruin the Christian Religion. First, because the extraordinary Miracles of the Son of God were a notable Confirmation of the Truth and Divinity of his Doctrine, he oppos'd the Impostures of Simon Magus, and Apollonius Tyanieus to his real Miracles. Secondly, because the Holiness of our Saviour's Life and Precepts was a powerful Persuasive to incline the World to Conversion, he introduc'd into the most Sacred Offices of Religion all Sorts of Lusts and Impurities, by his Instruments the Gnosticks and Carpocratians, who adopted their Vices into the Number of their Mysteries; to whom are to be attributed the Incests and Scandals unjultly charg'd upon the Orthodox Christians. And thirdly, lest these should prove ineffectual, that he might incline the World to be careless and vite, he taught. by the Mouths of Marcion, Blastus, and Florinus, That God was the Author of Sin, that he might supersede all Laws, and enervate the Force and Vigour of all Divine

Injunctions. Yet notwithstanding all these powerful Efforts, the Church of God, afflicted with Persecution without, and wounded with Hereticks within, still stood firm upon an impregnable Rock, gather'd Strength, increas'd, thin'd, and became the Wonder and Surprize of all the created Beings of the Universe.

CHAP. IV.

From the Middle of the Fifth Persecution, and Conclusion of the Second Century, to the Beginning of the Sixth General Perfecution of the Church under the Emperor Maximinus.

Containing the Space of about 35 Years.

HE Christian Religion had now diffus'd it self A. D. through all the known Parts of the World; but 201. more fully and triumphantly in the vast Roman Severi Empire, where it was most violently oppos'd, and met with the most terrible Conslicts. Christians were now in the Cities, Towns, and Villages, in the Camp, in the Se- Terral. nate, in the Palace, and in all Places besides the Pagan Enset Temples and Theatres; and that in fuch Numbers and Multitudes, that Tertullian affures us, that if they had unanimously retir'd to any other Country, the Empire would have become a mere Defart and Solitude. All the Cruelties of the Gentiles were to no effect; but a more powerful Invitation to others to encrease their Party; the oftener they mow'd them down, the faster they sprung up; and their Blood was a Seed that grew up to a more plentiful Harvest; and tho' several of the Gentiles had us'd their utmost Eloquence to exhort Men to Patience under Sufferings, yet they could never make so many Proselites with their Arguments, as the Christians did by their Actions. The Patience and Sufferings of the most Virtuous and Heroick Romans, were as far short of those of the Christians, as their Philosophy, was of the others Divinity. Their Heroes chose Death when they were no longer able to bear the Shame and Misery of Living: But the othersem-

brac'd that, and all Torments, when they might have commanded all the Conveniencies and Pleasures of Life: By which means they became triumphant in the midft of the most imaginable Difficulties. And this was the State of Christianity in the Third Century; in the first Year of which, and ninth of Severus, Victor Bishop of Rome, dy'd; some say by Martyrdom, after he held this Dignity about ten Years. He left some little Tracts behind him, particularly concerning the Time of keeping of Easter; and according to St. Jerom, he was the first Ecclesiastical Author who writ in the Latin Tongue, which must be before those of Tertullian and Apollonius. He was succeeded in the Church by Zephyrinus, a Roman, and Son of Habundius, who continu'd Bishop about 18 Years, and was the fourteenth Bishop of Rome, after the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. The Emperor Severus had now continu'd above three

Spart.

Years in the East; where, besides several Wars, he made many Regulations and Alterations. At length passing A. D. through the Country of Palestine, in the Tenth Year of his Reign, to grafifie his Heathen Subjects, he forbad all Severi Persons, under the severest Penalties, to turn either Jews or Christians; which Edict very much reviv'd and encreas'd the fifth General Persecution of the Church. And because this Persecution now rag'd more than ever, and Severus himself was so concern'd in it, who before was a Friend to the Christians, many Writers make the fifth Perfecution to commence this Year. The Governors of Provinces, and the bigotted People being let loofe, such Severities and Cruelties were practis'd in most Parts, that the Christians of those Days verily believed that the Times of Antichrist did then take Place; particularly Judas an Ecclefiastical Writer, mention'd by Eusebius, who wrote a Commentary upon Daniel's Seventy Weeks, and a Chronology ending at the tenth Year of Severus. This Emperor going into Agypt to view all the Rarities and Antiquities of that Country, caus'd the Persecution to rage in a more particular manner at Alexandria; to which Place, as Eufebius observes, the most select Champions of the Christians were brought out of all Agypt and Thebais, as to the noblest Stadium of the Almighty, to fuffer all Sorts of Torments and Deaths, and to be encircled with Crowns of immortal Bliss. This Persecution caus'd many Christians to retire from Alexandria, and among the rest, the celebrated Clemens, who was constrain'd to quit his great

stern'd Bilbion and an able lociofishical Writer

Catecherical School, and go over to Cappadocia; which Method he had vindicated in his Stromata, fince flying in Perfecution was according to our Saviour's own Advice. Among the many Martyrs, Leonides, Father to the renown'd Origen, was first imprison'd, then beheaded, and all his Estate confiscated. During his Imprisonment, young Origen, now but 17 Years of Age, began to discover a most impatient Desire of Martyrdom; and because he knew the deplorable Estate wherein his Father was like to leave his Wife and Children, might probably have great Influence upon his Mind, he by Letters paffionately exhorted him to persevere to the last; adding this Clause among others, Take heed, Sir, that your Care for us do not make you change your Refolution. And he himself had gone not only to Prison, but to the very Block with his Father, had not his Mother us'd all imaginable Arts to divert him; as first, Tears and all kinds of Endearments, and afterwards hiding all his Cloaths, so that mere Shame confin'd him to the House: A mighty Instance of a juvenile Forwardness and Maturity. This Origen had a most excellent and religious Education bestow'd upon him by his Father, who was so pleas'd to find him in his Youth fuch an admirable Proficient in the Holy Scriptures, that to give vent to his Joy, he frequently went into his Chamber when he lay afleep, and reverently kifs'd his naked Breaft, as a noble Treasure of an early Piety, and a divine Spirit. He had likewise learnt all the Institutions of the two great Masters Clemens Alexandrinus, and Ammonius Saccas; and by means of his Studies and natural Abilities, he was not only then a Miracle of his Years, but became afterwards the Wonder of the whole Age.

As the Perfecution rag'd at Alexandria, so no less at Lyons, where Severus had been formerly Governor, and where Ireneus Bishop of the Place was a shining Light. Here, as Gregory of Tours, and the ancient Martyrologies inform us, Ireneus having been prepar'd by several Tornients, was at length put to death, and together with him atmost all the Christians of that great and populous City, whose Multitudes could not be enumerated; so that the Streets of the City slow'd with the Blood of Christians. Ireneus was above 24 Years Bishop of this City, and a Person whose profound Learning was accompany d with great Prudence, Humility and Charity; so that she wanted no necessary Qualification of a good Christian, an accomplish'd Bishop, and an able Ecclesiastical Writer. Yet he

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is observ'd, as well as Justin Martyr, to have held some Opinions not strictly Orthodox, and to have had one Fail ing, common to him and many other ancient Authors, That he sometimes weaken'd and darken'd the most certain Truths of Religion, by Arguments not very folid. A. D. Not long after the Death of this great Oppoler of the Hereticks, there appear'd another fort of them call'd Ar-203. Severi chanticks, a Branch of the Marcofians, who among other extravagant Notions, held that Archangels created the World, from whence they had the Name of Archonticks. They deny'd the Refurrection of the Body, and plac'd perfeet Redemption in a Chimerick Knowledge; they judg'd that the God of Sabaoth exercis'd a cruel Tyranny in the 7th Heaven; that he engender'd the Devil, who begot Abel and Cain of Eve; and that the Woman was the Work of Satan. These wild Errors they defended by Books of their own composing, which they call'd, The Revelations

of the Prophets, and the Harmony. This Sect remain'd till

the time of Epiphanius, and were particularly found in Palestine and Armenia.

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II.

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Epiphan.

Theod.

To return to Alexandria, where the Persecution was carry'd on with fuch Violence, Leonides being beheaded, and all his Estate confiscated, young Origen remain'd with his Mother and Brethren, reduc'd to the utmost Poverty; but a rich Lady of the City, out of Respect and Compassion fion to his Misery, afforded him all kind of Affistance, and took him into her House. This Lady at the same time maintain'd one Paul, a noted Heretick of Antioch, whom the had adopted for her Son, who held Conferences in her House, where a great Number, not only of the Hereticks, but also of the Orthodox, were present. But, tho' Origen was oblig'd out of necessity to converse with this Man, yet he would never hold Communion with him in Prayer, keeping exactly to the Ecclefialtical Constitutions, and testifying his Abhorrence of the Doctrines of Hereticks. However, in a short time he put himself into a Condition of no longer needing this Lady's Charity; for applying himself vigorously after his Father's Death to the Study of Human Learning, the openid a School for the Profession of the Learned Arts, which less rais'd him a confiderable Maintenance. And tho' he was no then but a very Youth, yet did not the Grave and the Learned, the Philosophers and the Hereticks, disdain to be prefent at his Lectures; many of whom from Auditors, became his Converts, and afterwards Martyrs for the Faith. In a little time Fame recommended him to publick Notice;

tice; and the Chair of the great School of Alexandria becoming vacant by the Retreat of St. Clement, and the Flight of many Christians, some of the Heathers, who were disposed to be converted, made their Application for him to undertake the Charge, tho' he was not then above 18 Years of Age. The two first of his Disciples were Plutarch and Heraclas his Brother; and the Reputation and Number of his Converts encreasing every Day, Demetrius Bishop of the City confirm'd him in the Employment of Catechift, or Professor of Sacred Learning in the Church of Alexandria. Being setled in this Office, he executed it with infinite Diligence, and no less Success: and leaving off teaching Arts and Sciences, he fold all his Books that treated of human Learning, and gave himfelf intirely to the Instructing his Disciples in the Rudiments of Christianity. And then it was that he began to lead an extraordinary strict and austere Life, which with his Learning, brought over great Numbers of Disciples, notwithstanding the Fury of the Persecution, which in Alexandria was carry'd on then with greater Violence than ever, under the new Governor Agnila, Successor to Latus. Several of his Disciples suffer'd Martyrdom in the same Place : among whom were Serenus, Heraclides, Heron, Hermes, &c. and he himself was very often expos'd to the Rage of the Pagans, when he went to the Affistance, and Encouragement of the Martyrs. He then carry'd his Austerities to far, as to commit an Act of fuch Excess, that it was blam'd even by his greatest Defenders, and afterwards condemn'd by himfelf, tho' he did it upon a pious Motive, and out of an abundant Zeal and Charity. For his Employment obliging him to be often with Women. whom he instructed as well as Men, that he might remove from the Pagans all Ground of Suspicion of any blameable Conduct by reason of his Youth, he resolv'd to execute to the very Letter that Precept and Perfection which he was perfuaded our Saviour had propos'd in thefe Words of the Gospel, that there are some who make themselves EUNUCHS for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake. He endeavour'd to keep this Action private, and to conceal it from his Friends; but it was foon difcover'd; and being come to the Knowledge of Demetrins the Bishop, he then commended his Zeal and Faith, and excited him, Not to be discouraged upon that account, but to continue more earnestly in the Instruction of the Catechumens.

During the Heat of the Persecution, the Emperor Seve-

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triumph'd with great Magnificence over all those Nations which he had fubdu'd in his feveral Expeditions, having assum'd the Title of Parthicus Maximus, from his taking Seleucia and Ctesiphon in the Year 200. He likewise celebrated his Decennalia, upon finishing his tenth Year, and marry'd his Son Caracalla with Plantilla, the Daughter of his Favourite Plantianns, a severe Persecutor of the Chriflians, who for his Ambition and Treason not long after, receiv'd the just Reward of all his Wickedness. Severus chose to perform all his Solemnities soon after one another, that he might by out-doing all his Predecessors, make the People and Soldiers easie, and obliterate the Memory of his former Severities. And for that reason he gave them a Donative amounting to above a Million and a half of our Mony. His Spectacles were almost beyond Belief; for the Pit of the Amphitheatre, as Dian describes it, was like a Ship, contriv'd fo as to hold an incredible Number of wild Bealts; fuch as Lions, Panthers, wild Bulls, wild Affes, Offriches, and other strange Creatures, which for feven Days together were let loofe to combat A. D. each other. And as the all these pompous Solemnities had been insufficient, in the twelfth Year of his Reign, and Severi the feventh of Caracalla's, he celebrated the grand Secular Games, which, as they were the most splendid and magnificent of any regular Feasts among the Romans; so this Emperor was not defective in any thing that might contribute towards their Glory. This was the fourth time that these Games were celebrated fince the Birth of our Saviour, which was 57 Years after the last under Antoniwas Pins, 116 after those under Domitian, and 157 after those under Claudius. These pompous Shews gave occasion to the zealous Tertullian, who had lately been at Rome, to write his Piece de Spectaculis, ' in which he earnestly dissiwaded the Christians from being present at those publick Sights and Spectacles, shewing that those Diversions were both fcandalous and dangerous to those who had before reonounc'd the Pomps and Pleasures, as well as the Idolatry of the World. It is believ'd, that not long after he wrote his Book de Idololatria, against the Idolatry of the Pagans; the fome think it was wrote in the latter end of his Life, because there are several Passages in it more strict and rigid than in his former Writings, whilst he continu'd free from the Errors of Montanus. About the same time Mu-fanus, an Ecclesiastical Author, wrote a Book against those Hereticks call'd Encratites, of which we have nothing but the Title remaining.

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In the mean time the great Origen proceeded in his Employment with extraordinary Success, and many of his Disciples sea'd their Faith with their Blood. Besides the Martyrs before-mention'd, Plutarch his first Convert, was led to Execution; and not long after Marcella, and her Virgin Daughter Potamiena, were both confum'd in the same Fire. The latter was celebrated, not only for her Beauty, but also for her Chastity and Courage; which caus'd her to fustain a thousand Combats with her Lovers to preserve her Virginity, and no less Conflicts with her Enemies to preserve her Christianity. Being brought before the Judge Aquila, after he had inflicted grievous Stripes upon every Part of her Body, he threatned to deliver her to the Gladiators to violate her Chassity, if she did not deny her Faith. She still continu'd firm, and in her Answer reflecting severely upon the Pagan Religion, Aguila was so provok'd thereby, that he forthwith pronounc'd the definitive Sentence of Death, and Bafilides, one of the military Apparitors, led her to her Execution. When the Multitude endeavour'd to molest and reproach her with obicene Words, Bafilides prohibited and thrust them away, shewing much Commiseration and Humanity towards her. Potamiena being fensible of his charitable Intentions, freely exhorted him to be of good Courage, for that when she was gone bence, he would intreat her Lord for him, and would hortly make him an ample Requital. When the had Words, the couragiously underwent Death spoken these with her Mother, hot scalding Pitch being leisurely and gradually poured upon all the Parts of her Body, from the Crown of the Head, to the Sole of the Foot. Such was the Combat fought by this renown'd Virgin. Not long after, Bastides upon some Occasion, being desired by some of his Fellow-Soldiers to fwear, he openly declar'd himfelf a Christian; which at first they thought was spoke in Jest; but when he firmly maintain'd it, he was brought before the Judge, and making before him a Profession of he was immediately imprison'd. And when his Faith, some Christians repair'd to him, and ask'd the Cause of this findden and unexpected Change, he answer'd them, That Potamizena, three Days after her Martyrdom, flood by him in the Night, and put a Crown upon his Head, declaring that she had intreated the Lord for him, and had obtain a her Request, and that shortly the Lord would take him to him-Upon this Declaration the Brethren immediately imparted to him the Seal of Baptilir, and the Day follow-SA PUT HIE and Tiele remaining

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ing he was beheaded. Ensebins adds, that according to Report, many others in Mexandria were converted to the Faith by means of Potamiana, who appearing to them in

the Night, invited them to embrace the Gospel.

A. D. 205. Severi

12 . 13. Att. Per.

As the weaker Sex thus triumph'd in Alexandria, so no less in Africk, in the Persons of Perpetua and Felicitas, two Ladies of Tuburbu in Mauritania; the former of noble Parentage, 22 Years of Age, and now a Nucle to a Son, and the other of inferiour Extract, and very big with Child. These two Ladies being remarkable for their Religion, were accus'd and brought before Hillarian the prefent Governor of Africk, together with four other Christians, namely, Revocatus Brother to Felicitus, Saturninus and Satyrus Brothers, and Secundulus, all Catecumens, and very young. The Ladies nobly refifted a thousand Temptations and Perswasions, and joyfully endur'd all the Miferies of a Dungeon, where they receiv'd the Comfort of Heavenly Visions, and converted Pudens the Jaylor; and notwithstanding Felicitas was newly deliver'd of a Child in Prison, the was order'd two Days after with the rest of them to be thrown to the wild Beafts in the Amphitheatre in Carthage: Only Saturnians was brought back from the Beafts and beheaded, and Secundulus dy'd in Pri-This was done March the 7th in the 12th Year of Severus; of which we have a particular Account in the Acts of Perpetua and Felicitas, which are look'd upon as of great Authority. Thus the Christians fuffer'd in Africk, and about the fame Time, while Hillarian continu'd Governor, the common People with loud Out-cries demanded of him to take away from the Christians the Use of their Floors, or their Burying-places they then had: But, as Terrulian observes, God who hearken'd to the Cries of the Payans, render'd their Barn-floors useless; for he fent them no Corn for all that Year. Tertullian still continu'd a ffrenuous Defender of the Christians : but yet this great Man and Champion, who had gain'd fuch infinite Reputation, and done fuch noble Service to the Church, now in the middle of his Age (perhaps 45 Years) began to incline towards the Errors of the Montanifts, which foon caus'd him to separate from the Catholick Commu-The Fall and Separation of fo famous a Person was a mighty Temptation, and Discouragement to the Church in General; and the Caules of it are variously affign'd; some fay, it was for his being disappointed of the Bishopricks of Rome, and of Carthage; but this no ways agrees

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agrees with his mortify'd Temper, and known Contempt of the World. St. Ferom, with most Probability, tells us, that the Envy and Reproaches he met with from the Clergy of the Church of Rome, first caus'd him to fall off from the Church, and to joyn with Montanus and his Party, whose appearing Austerities were most agreeable to his rigid and violent Temper, and most exactly conspir'd with his fevere Course of Life. Tho' he did not run into all the Extravagancies of Montanus, but pretended chiefly to restore the Apostolick Discipline, yet in his after-Writings he frequently speaks of Montanus as the Paraclete that was to come into the World, and violently declaims against the Catholicks, under the Name of Psychici, or Animal Perions, who took too much Liberty in their Manners and Devotions, stiling his own Party Spiritales, as more immediately guided by the Holy Spirit, and conversant in a

more Divine and Spiritual Life.

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All this time the Emperor Severus diligently apply'd A. D. himself to the publick Affairs, spent a considerable time in visiting some Cities in Italy, in hearing Complaints, and Severi doing of Justice; for which he is deservedly applauded by all Writers; particularly he was so exact as to the Places of Trust, that he permitted no Man in his Dominions to Spare. fell his Honours and Dignities. He likewise erected ma-Dion. ny noble Works and Buildings in Rome, and other Cities, and had a special Regard to the Publick Good; and notwithstanding his Cruelty and Avarice, he perform'd many Parts of a wife Governor, and worthy Prince. Particularly he declar'd himself an Enemy to those Vices that. wounded Persons Reputations, and made new Laws against Adulterers: And the Age was then so loose, that three thousand were indicted for that Crime. He took fuch Care in the Treasury, that notwithstanding his infinite Expences and Donatives, he left behind him more Mony in the Exchequer than any of his Predecessors; and was so careful of Provisions, that he left in Rome such Quantities of Wheat, Wine and Oil, as were fufficient to maintain the City for five Years. He kept so many Legions of Soldiers, that he had no Cause to fear any Foreign Potentate whatfoever; but to them he gave fuch Rewards and Privileges, as the for the prefent they ilrengthen'd his own Interest, yet prov'd afterwards extreamly prejudicial to the Common-wealth. For the Soldiers having formerly by the Management of ill Emperors contracted Sloth and Avarice, were by these Incourage-

ments still more incited to violate the Sovereignty, to depole, destroy, and let up whom they pleas'd; which broke in pieces the Relicts of the ancient Discipline, and afterwards threw the Empire into fuch Confusions, as were never tolerably remov'd till the Reign of Diocletian.

Enfeb.

In the 14th Year of this Emperor's Reign, Narciffus Bishop of Jernsalem, after seven Years Retirement, in the Time of his third Successor Gordius, appear'd again in the City, as one rifen from Death to Life. And being return'd from his Solitudes, he was prevail'd upon by the People again to take the Government of the Church upon him; being highly reverenc'd by them both for his strict and Philosophical Course of Life, and for the fignal Vengeance which God had taken on his three Accusers formerly mention'd. It is believ'd that Gordins was joyn'd with him, who dy'd fhortly after; for that Narciffus was not only the 30th, as formerly mention'd, but also the 33d Bishop of Jerusalem after the Apostle St. James. In the 15th Year of the same Reign, Tertullian, as he tells us himself, wrote his Treatise against the Heretick Marcion, confifting of five Books, still extant. Tho' Tertullian was now a Montanist, he was free from the Herefie of the Marcionites; and in the first Book he shew'd that one of the Gods of Marrion was only a fantaltical and ima-' ginary Being. In the Second, he prov'd that the God, whom the fews worshipp'd, was the only true God, the Creator of the World, and the Author of all Good; refolving all the Difficulties which the Marcionices had ' rais'd against God's Covenant in the Old Testament. In the Third, he shew'd that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, the Creator of the World, and Author of the Law, who was foretold by the Prophets, and took upon him true Flesh, and human Nature. In the Fourth, he shew'd, that it was the same God both in the old and new Testament; reconciling the pretended Contradictions alledg'd by Marcion, and making it appear, that the whole Life of Fesis Christ was forevold and figur d in the old Testament. In the fifth Book he providerom the Epistles of St. Paul, that it was the fame God that

was preached both in the old and new Testament, and

that Jesus Christ was the Son of the Creator of the

time, he wrote, befides his Preferiptions formerly men-

tion'd, three Treatifes against other Herericks, as Prax-

eas, Hermogines, and the Vulentinians, besides other Pieces.

World. After his Schifm, and much about the same

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Against Praxeas, and the Patropassians, 'he maintain'd the Incarnation of our Saviour, and the Distinction of the Persons in the Holy Trinity; and shew'd that the Trinity of Persons did no ways prejudice the Unity of the Godhead, as the Unity of the Godhead did no ways hinder the Trinity of Persons. Against Hermogines he discover'd the Fallacies and Sophisms of that Heretick, hewing that our Religion taught us that God created even that Matter whereof he made the World. His Book against the Valentinians is rather a Satyr, and Piece of Railery, than a serious Confutation of the extravagant Sentiments of those Hereticks. We find two other Pieces of his near this Time, one of the Fiesh of Jesus Christ, and the other of the Soul: In the former he prov'd against several Hereticks, that Jesus Christ took upon him true Flesh; in the latter he falsely maintain'd the Corporeality,

as well as the Traduction of the Soul.

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Still the Emperor Severus proceeded vigorously in the A. D. publick Affairs; and having waded through a Sea of Blood to make way for his Family, he declar'd his two Sons Severi Successors conjointly, and gave to Geta the Title of Augustus, and the same Power with Caracalla, whose Behaviour made him extreamly uneasie. Not long after he re- Dion. ceiv'd Advice, That the Northern Inhabitants of Britain Spart. were up in Arms, and had been so successful, that the flanding Legions were in danger of being destroy'd. That therefore the Empire might not in his Reign be diminish'd by the Loss of an Island of such great Importance, he resolv'd to go thither in Person, tho' then aged and gouty; and the better to prevent the Enmity and Irregularities of his Sons, he took them along with him. The Britains understanding the Emperor's Approach, and dreading his Power, offer'd him an honourable Peace; but this Prince had fuch an infatiable Defire of obtaining the glorious Title of Britannicus, that he refus'd their Proposals. Upon his A. D. Entrance into the Country, he left his youngest Son Geta in the Southern Parts of the Province, which had continu'd Severi in Obedience; and march'd with Caracalla against the Morthern Britains and Caledonians; where with the cutring down Woods, making of Bridges, draining of Meers, and by the Enemies Ambuscades, and Sickness, he lost fifty thousand Men, according to Dion. The old Empefor encounter'd these Miseries and Difficulties with exceeding Bravery, and profecuted his Attempts with fuch a vigorous Resolution, that he at length forc'd his Eneand of the minimum believe other Pieces

mies to a Submission, and likewise to deliver up a considerable Part of their Country, and all their Arms. This was effected in the 17th Year of his Reign; in which Year it is probably believ'd that Philostratus the Athenian Orator, compos'd that samous History, or rather Legend, of the Life of Apollonius Tyanans, which he says, was taken from the Commentaries of one Damis, and revis'd and improv'd by the particular Order of the Empress Julia.

A. D. 210. Severi

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About the same Time an eminent Christian Lawyer of Rome, nam'd Minutius Feelix, wrote an excellent Defence of the Christian Religion, entitul'd Octuvins, in form of a Dialogue. 'It is a Conference between a Christian call'd Octavius, and a Heathen call'd Cecilius, at which Minuting fits as Judge. The Heathen first us'd all the feveral Arguments and Evafions, as well as all the feveral Calumnies and Reproaches that ever had been urgid in these Times against the Christians Actions, and their Religion. The Christian on the other fide gave full and convincing Auswers to every Particular alledg'd; and withal shew'd the noble Triumphs of the Christians in their innumerable Sufferings, far beyond the most hardy couragious of the old Romans. This finall Treatife is written with rare Elegancy, and an agreeable Turn, and the Reasons are set forth to Advantage, and beautify'd with a great deal of Learning; and as Lachantius observes, Minutias had been an admirable Defender of Religion and the Truth, had he entirely apply'd himself to this Stady. In the same Year, according to Mon. Tillemont, Textullian wrote his Book de Pallio, which was upon this Occasion. He had lately left off the Gown, the Garment ordinarily worn in all Parts of the Roman Empire, and had put on the Cloak, the usual Habit of Philosophers, and of those Christians that enter'd upon a severer State of Life; which caus'd him to be derided by them of Carthage for his Levity and Inconstancy, in turning from one Course of Life to another. To vindicate himself therefore, he wrote this Discourse, ' wherein he puts forth the ' Keenness of a Sarcastick Wit, and spreads all the Sails of his African Eloquence, retorting the Cafe upon his Accusers, shewing the Antiquity, Simplicity and Gravity of this Habit, and feverely reproving the Luxury and Prodigality that had of late over-run all Orders and Ranks of Men. Dupin handsomly observes, that it feems to have been written rather to flew his Wit and Parts, than for any ferious Defence of himfelf.

The Emperor Severus having been nigh two Years in Plon.
Britain, and rebuilt the famous Wall begun by Adrian, he Herod. retir'd to Ebonicum or York, where he grew weak, partly &c. with Age and Travel, and partly with Grief, for the irreclaimable Life of his eldeft Son. Hearing that the Soldiers had declar'd him Emperor, rouz'd with the Affront, he commanded him, with the Tribunes and Centurions, to be immediately brought before him; and when they implor'd Pardon upon their Knees, he briskly told them, That he govern'd with his Head, and not with his Feet, and to difinits'd them. His Diftemper increasing, and perceiving his Death approaching, he cry'd out, I have been all that a Man can be, but it is of no Use or Service to me now. And ordering his Urn to be brought, wherein his Ashes were to be enclos'd, and taking it in his Hands, he faid, Livele Um, thou shalt now contain what the whole World could not before. Then calling his Sons and his Friends about him, he made this remarkable Speech to them, When I souk the Empire upon me, I found it declining and languishing; and now being aged and decrepit, I leave it in a State firm and lasting to my Sons, if they prove good; if otherwise, soeble and finking. His Pains increasing, especially in his Feet, he in vain call'd for Poison, according to Au. Victor; and then glutted himself with gross Meats, which foon after ended his Life. Thus dy'd Septimins Severus, a Person both of extraordinary Vices and Excellencies, who is rather to be rank'd among the Great, than the Good Princes. He dy'd in the Beginning of the Year 211, on the 4th Day of February, under the Confulships of Gentianus and Bassus, being 65 Years of Age, and having reign'd 17 Years, 8 Months and 3 Days, reckoning from the Time of his being declar'd Emperor by the Senategolous 1 to side

Upon the Death of Severus, his two Sons Cara- A. D. calla and Geta were both declar'd and acknowledg'd Em- 211. perors, who agreed to leave Britain, and return to Rome CARAwith the Ashes of their Father. The first thing they did CALLA after their Arrival, was the Apotheofis, of Deification of the twenty their Father, which was perform'd after the ancient and secondRousual Custom ; and because it so well shews the Religion pero. and Paganish Superstition of the Romans, we shall here Hered. out of Hergdian briefly recite the Particulars of this pompour Ceremony. First, the whole City was commanded to go into Mourning, being mix'd with fome Festival Sodenout I rence of unniell

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lemnity: Next, a pale Image of Wax, exactly refembling the deceased Emperor, was plac'd at the Entrance of the Palace, upon a stately Ivory Bed magnificently adorn'd with Cloth of Gold: On the left hand were feated the whole Body of the Senators in Black; On the Right, the Ladies of the highest Quality in plain white Habits, without Jewels, or other Ornaments. This lasted for seven Days, during which Space the Physicians often resorted to the Image, as tho, it had been a living Patient, figuifying every time, That they had still less hopes of the Emperor's Life than before; at which Words the Mourners always gave a Groan. At last, when the Physicians had declar'd his Death, the noblest and youngest of the Senators and Equites carry'd the Bed upon their Shoulders through the Via Sacra into the old Forum; on each fide of which were erected two large Scaffolds, one fill'd with Lads, and the other with young Maids, all Children of the highest Quality, who after a most folemn and mournful manner lung Hymns and Songs in Honour of the Dead. These finish'd, the Senators and Knights again took up the Bed, and carry'd it out of the City into the Campus Martius, where was erected a beautiful Structure of Wood, almost in the Form of a Pyramid, with several Stories. The first was fquare, and a fort of a Chamber fill'd with all forts of combustible Matter, and the Outfide richly adorn'd with Cloth of Gold, Ivory, Statues, and fine Pictures: The fecond had the fame Ornaments, and was of the fame Figure, only was fomewhat lets, with the four Sides open: Upon this was a third still less, and upon that a fourth; and so several other less Stories, till the last terminated in a Point. The Bed and Statue being plac'd in the fecond Story, fill'd with the richeft Flowers, Plants, Odours, Gums and Spices, the Roman Knights rode on Horseback round the Pile in Order and Measure, according to the Sound of several Warlike Instruments: After them follow'd certain Persons in Chariots in Purple Robes, with Masks, representing to the Life the Faces of the most famous Commanders, and Emperors among the Romans. These ended, the Successors in the Empire set Fire to the Pile with Porches; the Confuls, Senators and Knights did the fame to their appointed Side; so that all was in a Flame immediately, and at the fame time from the Top of the Pile an Eagle was let fly, which was foon out of fight. This was accompany'd with infinite Shouts and Applaules; and the People

People being made to believe that it was that Eagle which carry'd the Emperor's Soul to Heaven, from that Moment they paid him the same Worship that they did to their other Gods.

Caracalla and Geta were both young Men; the former now about twenty three Years of Age; in his Youth he had been noted for his compaffionate Temper; but his Pity and good Nature foon forfook him, and he became one of the cruellest Monsters that ever reign'd. His Brother Geta was naturally of a milder and softer Disposition, and gaining the Affection of the People, Caracalla foon fought means to destroy him by Poyson, and also endeavour'd to bribe the Pratorian Soldiers by many Presents and Favours, and withal gave them leave to live according to their Pleasure. So that the City soon found the dangerous Effects of a State being govern'd by two Princes of equal Power and Authority, and so contrary in their Tempers, that they continually endeavour'd each other's Death. In Matters of Justice and publick Administration, they were ever contrary in Opinion; and in chusing of Commanders and Governors, each fought to prefer his own Friends and Favourites, as likewise they did in the Election of Consuls and other Magistrates, which caus'd all Affairs to fueceed according to Fayour and Contention. By which means insupportable Injuries and Disorders were daily committed, either of them persecuting the contrary Faction, without daring to punish those of their own Party, lest they should make them their Enemies; whence grew an universal Prejudice to the City and Province, and indeed in the whole Empire.

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As the Romans now met with daily Afflictions, so did. the Christians; for the fifth Persecution, which with different Degrees of Severity had continu'd near 14 Years, was still kept up; particularly in Africk by Scapula the Proconful of that Province. The Severities and Barbarities of this Man rouz'd the Spirit of Tertullian, who thereupon wrote a neat and pathetical Book to him, which is still remaining to us. In the Beginning, he represented to him, That the Christians rather chose, than fear'd Sufferings, and to change a temporal Life for an eternal; that therefore he did not direct his Discourse to him out of Apprehension for them, but out of an earnest Desire he had for the Salvation of the Heathers, fince the Christians were oblig'd to love their Enemies, and to endeavour their Conversion. He then represented the Honesty and 'Simplicity People

Simplicity of the Christians, and their hearty Prayers and

Endeavours for the Prosperity of the Empire, with those particular Inflances of Severity, which the Divine Providence had lately inflicted upon it, which could not reafonably be supposed to have been sent upon any other account, than to revenge the innocent Blood that had been shed; inciting him to Moderation by the Clemency and Indulgence of former Princes and Governors. Not long after, Caracalla forgetting the Christians, to follow other Cruelties, the Perfecution ended; and, as Sul. Severus affures us, the Church of God had a long Peace of 38 Years, fetting aside that little Interruption by the Emperor Maximinus in the Year 237. At the Ending of this Persecution, Origen had a great Desire to see the Church of Rome, so venerable for its Antiquity and Renown, and accordingly came thither in the time of Pope Zephyrin, where he flaid not long, but return'd back to Alexandria, and to his accustom'd Catechetick Office, Demetrius his Billiop earnestly importuning him to resume it. His two renown'd Predeceffors, Pantanus and Clemens, were still living, tho' probably in different Parts of the World; but how long they liv'd, and what Deaths they dy'd, we have no certain Account. Also Montanue was still living, who had broach'd his Herefie forty Years before, and was now

the ninth Bishop of Antioch after the Apostles. Origen being return'd from Rome to Alexandria, soon found his Employment to encrease, and Auditors to press in fo fast, that he wanted Leifure for Retirement, Contemplation, and the Study of the Holy Scriptures; fo that he was oblig'd to take in Heraclas for his Affistant, who had been his Disciple, and was well vers'd in divine and human Studies, by which he divided the Labour between them, committing the younger and more unturor'd Catechumens to Heraclas, and taking the maturer and older to his own Care. And now he made many Converts, as well of Hereticks as Heathers, particularly Ambrofius, noted for the Valentinian Herefie; so that great Numbers flock'd to him to make Trial of his fam'd Learning and Abilities, others to be instructed in the Precepts both of

writ against by Apollonius a Greek Author, who confuted the Practices and Manners of him and his Followers. In the fame Year 271, Serapion Bishop of Antioch dy'd, after he had been possess'd of that See 21 Years; and was succeeded by Afclepiades, a Person of celebrated Reputation, who held that Dignity about fix Years or more, and was

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Philosophy and Christianity. And the better to qualifie himself in Theology and the Understanding of the Holy Scriptures, he diligently let himself to learn the Hebreus Tongue, a Language little understood by the Fathers and the Learned in those Times; which he effected with extraordinary Labour, and to great Purposes. By this means the Church of Alexandria flourish'd exceedingly, as likewife did the Church of Ferusalem about the same time? of which we have the remarkable Account from Enfebrus of one Alexander, a worthy Bishop of Cappadocia, who out of a religious Curiofity, had refolv'd upon a Journey to Jesusalem, to visit the holy and venerable Antiquities of the Place, to which he was particularly excited by a divine Revelation intimating to him, that it was the Will of God that he should be affistant to the Bishop of the Place. For so it was, that the celebrated Narcissis, who had return'd fix Years before to his See at Ferufalem, and was now 116 Years old, became incapable through his great Age and Infirmities, duly to manage that Charge. Alaxander approaching near Ferufalem, the Christians were warn'd by a Vision and Voice from Heaven, to go out of the City, and there receive him whom Heaven had defign'd for their Bishop. This being done, and finding Alexander, they entertain'd and introduc'd him with all possible Kindnels and Respect; and by the Importunity of the People. and the Consent of all the neighbouring Bishops, he became Colleague with Narcissus in the Government of the Church, who liv'd with him about three or four Years. This is the first express Instance we meet with in Church Antiquity of two Bishops sitting at once by Consent in the fame See. Alexander held this Dignity with extraordinary Reputation about 39 Years, and was the 34th Bishop of Ferusalem after the Apostle St. James.

In the same Year at Rome all possible Methods were Herod. made use of to reconcile the two Emperors Caracalla and Spart, Geta; 'till at length upon the 27th Day of February, Caracalla resolving to be freed from a Rival, found means to kill his Brother, even in his Mother Julia's Arms, whither he had run for Shelter; having reign'd with him one Year, and 23 Days Immediately after the Fact, Caracalla rush'd out of the Palace, and run through the City to the Camp, where going directly to the Place where the Guards kept their Standards and the Images of their Gods, he threw himself upon the Ground to thank them for his Deliverance. After which he defir'd the Soldiers to pro-

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tect him, and with broken Speeches, like one recovering out of a Fright, gave them to understand, That he had at tast dispatch'd his Enemies that sought by Life. Whill they were musing and doubting, he put an end to all Scruples by his mighty Promises, telling them That he defir'd only to live and die with them; and immediately gave them all that incredible Mass of Mony which his Father Severus had been collecting during his whole Reign. This Donative not only satisfy'd the Soldiers, but caus'd them to threaten the Senate into a Compliance, who out of Fear approv'd of Geta's Death, and justify'd the Murther. Caracalla, to appeale all, perform'd many Acts of Mercy, and likewise deify'd his Brother, being content, as he declar'd, that he should be a God above, so he was not alive upon Earth. But all these Acts of Remorse were soon defac'd by his brutal Cruelty towards those who were but the least suspected of favouring his Brother; and all his Servants and Guards, with their Wives and Children, to the Number of twenty Thousand, were without Merey put to Death. Papinian the renown'd Civilian, with many others of the most illustrious Families, were likewise executed upon the weakest Pretences. Whole Nights were spent in the Execution of bloody Ediets; and the dead Bodies of Persons of all Ranks and Ages were contemptuously thrown into Carts, and hurry'd out of the City, where they were burnt in Heaps, without the Decency of common Ceremonies. So that the proud City of Rome, which had often dipp'd her Hands in the Blood of the innocent Christians, had now her Streets overflown with the Blood of her chiefest Citizens; and was trampled upon by one of the greatest Monsters in the Universe. Garacalla being generally detested in the City, in the third Year of his Reign, refolv'd to take a Journey through the Provinces of the Empire; and his first Progress was into Gallia Narbonenfis, where for the time he tarry'd, he perform'd as great Mischies as he could. He kill'd the Proconful of the Province, and broke in upon the Privileges of several Cities; and when he had gain'd the Hatred of the whole Province by his tyrannical and cruel Deportment, he return'd back to Rome, before his Expedition into Germany, as feveral learn'd Antiquaries are of opinion. In the fame Year there hapned a celebrated Disputation

between Caim, an Orthodox Presbyter of the City and

Disciple to Irenaus, and one Proclus, who was one of the Heads of the Montanist Party, wherein the latter being

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yanquish'd, was together with all the Followers of that Sect, excommunicated by the Church of Rome, and even Tertullian himself among the rest, as he sufficiently intimates in his Piece de Jejuniis. This, to a Person of so rigid and unyielding a Temper as Tertullian, was so far from reclaiming or recovering him, that it made him more fierce and implacable than ever against the Orthodox and Catholicks, looking upon them as far too licentious in their Lives, and himself and his Party as the only true Practicers and Restorers of Discipline and Devotion. Accordingly he wrote four Treatifes principally against the Catholicks, viz. of Modesty, of Monogamy, Exhortations to Chaftity, and of Fasts. In his Book of Modesty, 'he endeavour'd to prove against the Church, that it had no power to remit the Sins of Fornicators and Adulterers, and that fuch as fell into these Crimes after Baptism, could not be admitted into the Communion of the Church. how penitent foever they were. In his Book of Monogamy and Exhortations to Chastity, 'he absolutely condemn'd second Marriages as being Adultery. In his Discourse of Fasts, the commended the excessive Fasts of the Montanifts, who made several Lents, observing the Stationa-Fasts, as if they had been expresly enjoin'd, making them to continue 'till Night, and eating upon those Days only Bread and Fruits, and drinking only Water. As Tentullian continually declin'd in the Opinion of the Church. to Origen daily improved, and became the Wonder of all Men; and having with infinite Labour and Industry examin'd all Parts of the Holy Scriptures, he compos'd that Carac. great and famous Work call'd the Tetrapla; which was a Bible, wherein by the Side of the Hebrew Text, he had transcrib'd in different Columns, the Translation of the Septuagint, that of Aguila, that of Symmachus, and that of Theodotian, distinguish'd all by Verses, to which he afterwards made great Improvements and Additions. This and other Works extreamly encreas'd his Reputation, and drew great Numbers of learned Men from all Parts to Alexandria to converse with him, and to be instructed by him. About this time came a Messenger from the Governor of Arabia with Letters to Demetrius the Bishop, and to the Præfect of Agypt, defiring that with all speed Origen might be sent to impart the Christian Doctrine to him; to considerable had the Fame of this great Man render'd him abroad in Foreign Nations. Accordingly he went into Arabia, with great and solemn Attendance; in which Nation

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558 Cent. III. Erclesiastical History. Book III.

Mation having perform'd his Business, he return'd to his

Charge in Alexandria.

Dien. Herod. Spart.

In the mean time the Emperor Caracalla pursu'd his intended Journey through the Empire; and taking his Way towards Germany and the Damebe, there at finit, to win the Hearts of the Country People, he follow'd the Fashions of that Country, took upon him the German Habit, and chose such of the Germans as were most strong and active, for his Guard. He fought also to gain the Affections of the other Soldiers, by showing himself affable and fociable, personally affilting them in their Labours, joining in their Diet, and doing many things like a hardy Man and a Soldier. By which means he became popular in the main; but he could not with hold himself from many Extravagancies and Cruelties, as putting certain eminent Men among the Germans to Death, and maffacring a great Number of their Youth whom he had got together on pretence of lifting them into his Service. From Germany he pass'd through Thrace into Macedonia, where he foolishly presended to imitate Alexander the Greatin all his Actions; and had a Body of 16000 Macedonians about him, whom he call'd his Phalarx, in Imitation of that ancient Body of Maredonian Foot fo call'd. From thence he cross'd into the lesser Asia, where at Pergamos he sacrific'd to Escutepins for the Recovery of his Health. For now he began to be afflicted with feveral firange forts of Difeafes; which beginning in Germany, made forme Perfons believe that the Inhabitants of that Country had turn d his Brain by their Charms and Incantations. It is more probable that Caracalla's Crimes made him horribly uneasie, and that the Disturbance they gave him, at length affected his blead; for he was frequently affrighted with dreadful Visions, and often imagin'd that he faw his Father and Brother come upon him with drawn Swords. His reftless Fears drove him to make use of Magical Arts to raife the Dead; and amongst others, he called for the Ghosts of his Father and of Commodus. His Brother's Gholt came up with his Father's the uncall'd for; and tho' they faid nothing, they join'd in tormenting him, whilst the Ghost of Commodus bad him aloud prepare for Vengeance. It is no wonder then, that neither Supplications, nor Gifts, nor Ceremonies, could cure this Malady; that neither Apollo-Grynaus, nor Afculapius, nor Serapis, could give Caracalla any Ease, tho' he fent noble Prefents to each of them, and was initiated with the great-

A. D. 215. Carac.

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eft Superflition in all their Rites. So that Dion, the Genwile Historian himself confest, That God more regarded the Actions of Caracalla than his Gifts. In this restless Condition he shifted about from Place to Place 'till his Death, and going to Troy, he there in all his Actions imitated Achilles, travelling more like a Player than an Emperor, which Levity caus'd the Derision of some, and the Indignation of others. In the following Spring he hafted A. D. to Alexandria, v here he refolv'd upon an unheard of Piece of Revenge against the Inhabitants, for their Jests, Carac. and contemptible Names they had given him. At his Arrival, he was folemnly receiv'd with great Joy and a mighty Concourse of People, gather'd together from many Parts. Here he offer'd feveral Sacrifices, and shew'd many great Favours to the Inhabitants; but shortly after, affembling them to fee fome publick Games, he caus'd them to be fuddenly furrounded by his Soldiers, and infinite Numbers of all Ages and Degrees were miferably cut in Pieces, to the vast Astonishment and Terror of the whole Country. After this monstrous Action, he pass'd into Syria; and being defirous to fignalize himself by some memorable Exploit, he fent to Artabanus King of Parthia, to defire his Daughter in Marriage, declaring, That he was coming to folemnize the Nuptials; and that King being perswaded to meet the Emperor in a large Plain with a iplendid Concourse of Nobility, unarm'd Soldiers and People, he fudddenly fet upon them with his Army, and made a most terrible Slaughter, Artabanus himself hardly escaping. For this Piece of Treachery, he assum'd the Title of Parthicus, as he had before that of Germanieus, for killing some of the German Nobility.

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The barbarous Cruelties of this Emperor at Alexandria Englished or Origen from that City; and not knowing any Place in Agypt that could afford him Shelter, he retir'd into Palefine, and fixt his Residence at Casarea. Where his admirable Abilities being soon discover'd, he was requested by the Bishops of those Parts, tho' but then in the Capacity of a Lay-man, publickly in the Church, and before themselves, to expound the Scriptures to the People. The News hereof was immediately carry'd to Alexandria, and highly resented by Demetrius the Bishop, who by Letters expostulated the Case with Theostistus Bishop of Casarea, and Alexander Bishop of Jernsalem, as a thing never heard of before in the Christian Church. They in their Answer put him in mind, that it was no such unusual Thing for

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Laicks to preach by Order, and in the Presence of Bishops, whereof they gave him particular Instances. All which did not satisfie Demetrius, but he by Letters commanded Origen to return, and fent Deacons on purpose to urge him to it; whereupon he came back, and apply'd himself to his wonted Charge. Before his Return he found a new Version of the old Testament into Greek, in a Vessel a-mong other Greek and Hebrew Books at Jerico. It was done by some unknown Jew, and was the fourth Greek Version of the old Testament since our Saviour's Nativity; it was found in the 7th Year of the Emperor Caracalla, A. D. 217. About which time, or very shortly after, Caracalla met with the Reward of all his Wickedness, by the Contrivance of Macrinus, one of his chief Commanders, and the Hands of Martialis, who stabb'd him whilst he was retir'd from his Company to ease Nature. This was the End of one of the cruellest Monsters in the Universe; and we can't but admire the just Judgment of Heaven in cutting off the Posterity of Severus in the first Generation, who had labour'd by all possible Methods, just and unjust, to secure a lasting Empire to his Family. Caracalla died on the 8th Day of April, under the Confulfhips of Presens and Extricatus, being 29 Years of Age, and having reign'd fix Years, two Months, and four Days.

A. D. 217. MACRI-NUS peror. Dien. Hered. Capitol.

Shortly after the Death of Caracalla, Opilius Macrinus, the chief Contriver of the Assassination, upon Supposition of his Innocence, was chosen Emperor by the Army, and likewise acknowledg'd by the Senate at Rome. the twenty He was now about 53 Years of Age; a Person of an man Em- obscure Parentage, and a Moor by Birth, who with small Defert, and much Favour obtain'd the Office of Pratorian Præfect, and by Treason and Chance arriv'd at the Empire. He also nominated his Son Diadumenianus, a Youth of ten Years of Age, for his Companion and Equal in the Empire, to whom he gave the Name of Antoninus, because that Name was highly acceptable to the Romans. Not long after Macrinus's Election, Artabanus King of Parthia came down with a mighty Army upon the Frontiers, threatning to be reveng'd upon the Romans for all the Injuries he had receiv'd under Caracalla. Macrinus, who wanted both Courage and a good Cause, readily sent back all the Prisoners, desiring the Friendship of Artabanus, and charging all upon his Predecessor; but the Parthian

Chap. IV. MACRINUS the 23d Rom. Emp.

thian King, knowing the Weakness of the Roman Army, requir'd more ample Reparations, and coming forwards as far as Nisibis, the Romans were beaten in several Engagements, and Macrinus was glad to purchase a Peace by distributing among the Parthians a Sum exceeding a Million and a half of our Mony. After this, and some little Advantages obtain'd against the Armenians, Macrinus with his Son, repair'd to Antioch, where he principally follow'd the Pleasures of the Place, neglected the Government of the Empire, and delay'd his Journey to Rome, tho' he was often follicited both by Letters and his own Soldiers, to come to the City. In which he committed a great Error; for his staying to partake of the Debaucheries of Antioch, and his ill-tim'd Severities to his Soldiers, prov'd the Occasion of his Ruin a few Months

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In the same Year it is believ'd, that Asclepiades Bishop Enset. of Antioch, dy'd, after he had worthily fill'd that See a- Epiph. bout fix or eight Years; and was succeeded by Philetus who held that Dignity about eight or ten Years, and was the tenth Bishop of Antioch after the Apostles. In the same Year also Mon. Tillemont places that remarkable Story of Natalis a Confessor at Rome, which Ensebius in the latter End of his fifth Book, relates from an anonymous Au-This Natalis, had been seduc'd by Asclepiodotus and Theodotus a Banker, both Disciples of that Heretick formerly mention'd, Theodotus the Currier, who perswaded him to be made a Bishop of their Sect, upon consideration of a certain Monthly Salary. Being thus beguil'd by the Bait of Primacy, as well as Profit, God, who was particularly merciful to the Afferters of his Son's Honour, was pleas'd first to admonish him by Visions; and after that, to torment him all Night by his Angels, in order to his Recovery and Restoration. Insomuch, that rising very early, with Sackcloth and Ashes, and a Flood of Tears, he cast himself down before Zephyrinus Bishop of Rome, and also before the Clergy and Laity; using all Methods to move the Compassion of the injur'd Church. ter many Intreaties and Supplications, and shewing the Prints of the Stripes he had received by the Instruments of Heaven, he was with much Difficulty receiv'd again into the Communion of the Church. As for Theodotus the Banker, he formed a new Sect of his own, and added some Things to the Theodotians formerly mention'd, as particularly that Jesus Christ was inferior to Melchisedeck, VQL. II.

who was, according to his Opinion, Eternal without Father or Mother, and the Advocate of Angels; and that Jesus Christ was pure Man, and exercis'd the Office of Advocate only for Men. For which Reason his Followers obtain'd the Name of Melchisedecians.

A. D. 218. Macri.

Dien. Herod. &c.

In the mean time the Emperor Macrinus daily lost ground in the Reputation of all wife Men; but that which most promoted his Downfal, was the Artifices of Masa, Sister to the late Empress Julia, who upon the Death of Caracalla had retir'd to Emesa in Phanicia, with all her Family and her vast Estate which she had gain'd by living above twenty Years in the Emperor's Court. Her Family confifted of two Widow Daughters, Soamias and Mamaa, and their Sons Bassianus and Alexianus, one 14, and the other 12 Years of Age. Emesa was a City famous for worshipping the Sun in the Shape of a Black Conical Stone: which Idol, they faid, came down from Heaven. and was call'd Elagabal, or the Forming God. Now Baffianus being a Priest of that Temple, he obtain'd the Name of Elagabalus, or as some write it, Heliogabalus; and he was much admir'd by the Roman Soldiers for his fine Shape and Beauty. Masa finding the Soldiers to affect him, that she might lose no Advantage, readily prostituted her Daughter's Honour by reporting that he was the real Son of Caracalla; and by means of large Sums, great Promifes, and producing her Grandson in the Roman Camp near Emela, the procur'd the Soldiers there to proclaim him Emperor, under the Name of M. Aurelius Antoninus; which was done on the 15th Day of May, 218. mus at first contemn'd that Faction rais'd only by a Woman and a Boy, and thought it sufficient to send a Commander call'd Julian to chastize the Revolters; but for want of his own Personal Appearance, the Soldiers under Julian were soon corrupted, cut off their General's Head, and went over to Elagabalus. This oblig'd Macrinus immediately to make use of his whole Power; but he wanting Courage himself, and his Army an Inclination to fight, he was intirely defeated; and flying with all Secrefie and Expedition towards Rome, where his Arrival was defir'd, he was overtaken at Chalcedon, and both he and his Son put to Death. This hapned on the 7th Day of June, under the Consulships of Himself and Adventus, he being fifty four Years of Age, and having reign'd but one Year and two Months, wanting three Days.

Immediately after the Death of Macrinus and his Son, ELA-Elagabalus, by the Advice of his Grandmother Masa, GABAwrote to Rome in the most obliging manner imaginable; LUS which notwithstanding was ill digested by the Senate and the twen-People, who much more defir'd the Government of Ma-ty fourth Roman crinus. But finding they were unable to refift such a Emperor. powerful Party, they yielded Obedience to Elagabalus, of Herod. whom they conceiv'd fome Hopes, both upon the Ac- &c. count of his good Shape, and for his Name of Antoninus. By reason of his Youth, many Things were at first order'd by the Advice and Directions of Masa and her Favourites, who setling the unquiet Affairs of the East, hastned towards Rome with the young Emperor; but being constrain'd to winter at Nicomedia in Bithynia, he there by feveral Inflances manifested his scandalous and irreclaimable Life. He was but fourteen Years of Age when he was elected; and as he was the youngest, so he was the most loose and profligate Emperor that Rome, or perhaps the World ever faw. His Life is one continu'd and amazing Instance of the most superlative Esseminacy, and the most unaccountable Extravagancy; and it cannot be determin'd which was most notorious, his unbridled Obscenity, his boundless Prodigality, or his Fantastical Foolery. It affords a melancholy View of Mankind, that when left to themselves and abandon'd to their Lusts, no Sense of Honour, no Regard of Humanity or common Decency, can restrain them. And that which made these Things the more wonderful in this Emperor, was, that an extraordinary Vein of Superstition run through all his Actions; fo that whilst he liv'd like a Brute, he would needs feem pious and religious.

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His Mother Soæmias was infamous like himself, but his Aunt Mamæa was a Woman of admirable Virtues; and tho' the Domestick Examples she had been us'd to, were far from being excellent, yet she kept her self uncorrupted in the midst of so much Impurity, and took a strict Care to keep her Son Alexianus the same. She was not only virtuous according to the Heathen Notions of Virtue and Goodness, but her Aims were infinitely higher. Being a Syrian born, she could not but be acquainted with the Affairs both of Jews and Christians; and having heard of the great Fame of Origen, was extreamly desi- Enseb. rous to fee him, and hear him concerning Religion, that the might truly understand it, and know what it was, for which the World had him in fuch Veneration. And for

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this purpose, before the Emperor's Departure from the East, the fent for him from Alexandria, ordering a military Guard to conduct him to Antioch, where he staid with her tome confiderable Time; and having fully open'd the Doctrines of Christianity, and given her many Demonstrations of the Faith of its Professors, to the great Honour of God and Religion, he was honourably difmis'd, and permitted to return to his old Charge in Alexandria. It is probable that she was baptiz'd; since several Writers do account her a Christian, and her Piety is fo highly commended by Eusebius a Christian Bishop; befides, the was so great a Patroness, that the protected the Church from all Perfecution during all her Son's Reign. Some late Writers are of Opinion, that this Interview between Origen and her was several Years after this time; but Mon. Tillemont in his 16th Note upon his Life of 0rigen, has given fufficient Reasons to place it in this prefent Year 218. In which Year, it is believ'd that Maximilla, one of the two great Prophetesses of the Montanists, dy'd. In the same Year also, or the following, Zephyrinus Bishop of Rome dy'd, after he had held the Dignity 18 Years, and was fucceeded by Califtus, an Italian of Ravenna, Son of Domitius, who continu'd in the See 5 Years, and was the 15th Bishop of Rome after the Apofiles St. Peter and St. Paul.

A. D. 219. Elagab.

> Herod. Dian. Lamp.

Elagabalus having pass'd the Winter at Nicomedia, in the following Spring came to Rome, where he made large Distributions, and noble Spectacles of all forts; but his only Concern for any Thing that might claim the Name of Bufiness, was to do Honour to his Syrian Stone-Idol, by which he represented the Sun; to which with all posfible speed he erected a magnificent Temple. To this Temple he repair'd every Morning, and offer'd Hecatombs of Oxen, with an innumerable Quantity of Sheep, which he laid on Altars loaded with the richest Spices, and wash'd with the noblest Wines, which were consum'd with incredible Profusion, that the greater Honour might be paid to this Image. These extravagant Superstitions, celebrated with all forts of Musick and Dancings perform'd by Phænician Women, were so much the more insupportable, by how much Elagabalus made them burthensome to the Persons of the highest Quality; for the whole Body of Senators and Equites were oblig'd to attend these Ceremonies as often as the Emperor thought fit to call them. Besides this Temple near the Palace, he

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built another in the Suburbs to his God, whither annual- A. D. ly in the Heat of Summer the original Image, which he had brought from Emesa, was carry'd, where the Pro- Elagab. ceffion was as pompous as possible: For the Idol was plac'd alone in a triumphal Chariot most exquisitely adorn'd; and the Emperor held the Reins himself, running backwards by the Chariot fide, that he might the more frequently view his Deity; all which was accompany'd with the Images of all other Gods, and the most facred and valuable Treasures of the Roman Temples. The Gentile Romans, who had been educated with Sentiments of Reverence towards their other Gods, were extreamly mortify'd, to fee, that what soever they held dear or facred in their Idolatrous Worship, must all now be facrific'd to this new Image. They could have been fatisty'd to have worshipt it as the Tutelar Deity of the Emeseni, and as fuch to have erected a Temple to it; but to prostrate all their other idols to this fingle one, was, as they thought, abominable. Yet nothing less would satisfie Elagabatus, who accounted all their ancient Gods as only Servants and Attendants to his; tho' fome of them were so much favour'd, as to be chosen either for a Wife or for Companions to this. He was also so vain, as to hope to comprehend the Jewish and the Samaritan Religions in his own, and therefore perhaps it was that he circumcis'd himself, and superstitionsly abstain'd from Swines Flesh; for he was defirous to put the Rites of all Religions in practice, that he might the more eafily bring them that were of other Religions, to pay a Reverence to his own Deity. It is probable that he would have been baptiz'd too, vainly imagining that by that means he might feduce the Christians to the Worship of his Idol; and perhaps he was, if there were any Apollates profligate enough to betray their Faith to gratifie his fantastick Humour. As for the other Impieties and Monstrosities related of this Emperor, the Hints we have before given, are sufficient in this Place; they being fo much below a Prince, and also a reasonable Man, that they ought to bury'd in Oblivion.

In the third Year of this Emperor's Reign, Dion relates a strange Story of an Apparition of Alexander the Great, or some Damon in his Shape, near the River Danube, who with four hundred Companions, drest and dancing like Bacchanals, pass'd through Masia and Thrace to Byzantium, without any Endeavours of Opposition from the M 3

A. D. 221.

Elagab.

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Soldiers and Governors, who allow'd them all Accommodations in their Journey. Then passing the Sea to Calcedon in Asia, there, after several peculiar Ceremonies perform'd, and putting a wooden Horse into the Ground, they wholly disappear'd. In the same Year a noted Christian, call'd Julius Africanus of Palestine, obtain'd a Deputation from the Emperor to cause the City of Emmaus near Ferusalem to be repair'd, which was afterwards call'd by the Name of Nicopolis. This Africanns about the same time compos'd an exact Chronicle divided into five Books. from the Beginning of the World, to the third Year of the Reign of Elagabalus, wherein he gave a brief Account of the most remarkable Accidents from the Creation, to the time of Jesus Christ, and related in few Words all that hapned from our Saviour's Time, to that wherein he wrote. We have not this famous Work under Africanus's Name; but Eusebins has inserted it almost entire in his Chronicon, altering and adding fome few Things, and correcting some of his Mistakes. Besides his Chronicle, he afterwards wrote two Letters, one to Arifides, to reconcile the seeming Difference between St. Matthew and St. Lake, concerning our Saviour's Genealogy; and the other to Origen, to shew the Fabulousness, or at least the Uncertainty of the History of Susanna.

Lamp. &cc.

In these Times Elagabalus having rendred himself odious and despicable to all Men, was prevail'd upon by the Artifices of his Grandmother Masa, to adopt his Cousin-German Alexianus, tho' but two Years younger than himfelf, and to make him Cufar and his Successor, giving him the Names both of Alexander and Severus. This strange Adoption was readily confirm'd by the Senate, but in a short time it much displeas'd Elagabalus; for he found the Dispositions of young Alexander too virtuous for him, and that the growing Hopes of that wonderful Youth would foon eclipse his Glory. This put him upon many foolish as well as impious Projects to destroy him; but fearing that the Senate might ruin his Designs, by chusing another Emperor, he refolv'd to anticipate them, and in the fourth Year of his Reign, An. 222, he suddenly banish'd the whole Senate out of the City, without allowing them to make the least Preparations for Travelling. Shortly after, having unfuccessfully endeavour'd to poison Alexander, that he might found the Soldiers, he reported that he was dead, which immediately rais'd a Mutiny among them. To appeale which, he immediately took Alexander

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der along with him in a glorious Chariot to the Camp; where the Soldiers Acclamations were folely directed to his Cousin, and no Respect shewn to himself; which so enrag'd him, that he threatned the Authors of the Mutiny with the severest Punishments. But the Tempest was grown too high, and the Army was refolv'd to rid this World of the Monster, and thereupon ran furiously after him, intending to kill him where-ever they found him. In a short time they found him with his Mother hanging about him in a Sink of the Army, whither he fled, hoping to escape by that secret Way; but the Passage being too narrow, he was stopt, and the Soldiers immediately cut of his and his Mother's Head, dragg'd their Bodies through the Streets, after the most ignominious Manner, and at last threw his headless Trunk into the common Sewers that led into the River, with a Weight ty'd to it, that it might never rife again and be bury'd. Thus dy'd Elagabalus, the most vile and abominable Prince in the World, out of Hatred to whose Memory, a Decree was made by the Senate and People of Rome, That thenceforward no Emperor of Rome should be call'd by the Name of Antoninus. His Death hapned on the 11th Day of March, being in the 18th Year of his Age, and having reign'd three Years, nine Months, and four Days.

IV. Immediately after the Death of Elagabalus, young Alexander was by an universal Consent acknowledg'd Emperor of Rome, being now about fixteen Years of Age, ALEXand a Prince of fuch admirable Virtues and Qualificati- ANDER ons, that they ought not to be pass'd over in an Ecclesia- the imenty fical History without particular Notice. This Prince hav- man Eming the most celebrated Men for his Masters and Tutors, perer. became skilful in all Arts and Sciences, and was fo con- Lamp. siderable for his Parts and Abilities, that at the Beginning Hered. of his Administration, he rather seem'd a wise old Man, than a Youth. By the Advice of his wife Mother Mamaa, he chose the worthiest, and most experienc'd Persons of the Empire for his Council; and never acted any Thing without their Opinion, notwithstanding his own Absolute Authority, and that he was so judicious and sagacious himself, that scarce any Man could impose upon his Understanding, By the Affistance of his great Counsellors, he immediately fet about a general Reformation; and first, he fent back all the Foreign Images that had been brought to Rome, to their respective Cities and Temples; then he M 4

remov'd all those impure Ministers of Elagabalus, the Eunuchs, the Buffoons and Pantomimes, with an incredible Number of lewd Women, that had been brought into the Palace. He wou'd admit none to pay their Devoirs to him, his Wife, or Mother, but Persons of Honesty, and known Reputation; folemnly forbidding by the publick Cryer all fuch as knew themselves to be otherwise, to approach his Presence, threatning that if he once discover'd them, it shou'd cost them their Lives. And that he might remove all Corruptions of Manners, he destroy'd the Use of mixt Baths in Rome, where both Sexes bath'd together; all which had been prohibited by some of the good Emperors, but were reviv'd by his infamous Predecessor. He restrain'd the ordinary Charges of the Court, and reduc'd the Palace to an excellent Order, abridging the superfluous Expences introduc'd by the Luxury of former Emperors. He apparell'd himself with great Plainness and Modesty, alledging, That Government confifted in Virtue, and not in costly Attire; wherefore he wore no Jewels, nor wou'd permit any in his Chamber, and accounted it a great Vanity, That a Thing so small in Quantity should be so large in Price. He never made use of golden Cups, nor allow'd above 200 Pound Weight of Silver Vessels in his Palace; so that at publick Entertainments he usually borrow'd both Plate and Servants of his Friends. He was highly affable and courteous in his Temper, familiarly vifited all Persons of Worth, and permitted any Man perfonally to inform him of their Bufiness; and finding their Demands reasonable, he perform'd their Requests; if otherwise, he calmly debated the Matter with them, and shew'd them their Errors. He kept a private Memorial of the Names of fuch as ought to be confider'd for their Services, and the Presents made to deserving Persons, which he frequently view'd; and when he found any to whom he had given nothing, or not answerable to their Merits, he call'd them to him, asking, Why they were so backward in demanding a Reward; and why they would suffer him to continue in their Debt? He took care of the Education of great Numbers of poor Children, and was very bountiful to all indigent Persons of Merit; and he is observ'd every Day to have done fome good to others, in which he exceeded the renown'd Titus, by having the Happiness of a longer Reign.

As the Bounty of this Emperor extended to all, fo did his Care to all publick Officers and Magistrates, in the

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Choice of whom, his Opinion was, That they were most fit for publick Places who declined them, not those who sued for them; to which he frequently added, That such only ought to be advanc'd, who could discharge their Offices by themselves, and not by Deputies. That he might be exact in chufing Men, when he appointed Governors of Provinces and Cities, he publish'd the Names of the Persons defign'd, defiring and encouraging all Men to make all just Objections against them, and to prove their Accufation; with this Proviso, that if they did not make good their Charge, and if it proceeded from Malice, the Accufer shou'd be immediately beheaded: For, said he, since Christians and Jews use such careful Methods in the Choice and Ordination of their Priests, it is most reasonable that the like Course should be taken in the Choice of Rectors of Pravinces, to whom are committed the Lives and Fortunes of those under their Subjections. He would in no Case permit Offices and Places to be bought and fold: For, declar'd t.e, He who buys his Office must needs sell Justice; I cannot bear any Merchants in Authority, which if I tolerate, I cannot afterwards condemn their Actions; and I shall blush to punish that Person who bought, since I once permitted him to be a Buyer. He was also a severe Punisher of fuch Magistrates as were guilty of any corrupt Practice; and frequently faid, He had always his Finger in readiness to pluck out the Eyes of that Judge who was partial, or received Bribes and Gratuities; in which he was so strict, that when Arabinus, a Person accus'd of Bribery, came to pay him his Respects, he cry'd out in a violent Passion, Arabinus not only lives, but takes me for such a senseless Prince, as to appear in my Presence. He banish'd one of his Secretaries for forging a Bill in his Council, and caus'd the Sinews of his Fingers to be cut through, that he might never be able to write after. And becaute the Corruptions of publick Officers were of fuch dangerous Confequence, he often declar'd, That since their Trusts were so great, in most Cases, the Loss of their Places was an insufficient Punishment, that nothing could recompence for such Mischiefs, but the Loss of their Lives. Accordingly, he commanded one of his Servants, who had receiv'd a hundred Crowns of a Soldier for a Bribe, to be hang'd in the High-way, where his Servants commonly pals'd to his Houses out of the City. Nor would he spare his chief Favourite Turinus, who for taking Mony for a Place, and not performing his Part in it, was adjudg'd by him

to be bound to a Stake in the main Forum, and to be smother'd to Death with the Smoke of green Wood, and wet Stubble, the publick Crier in the mean time proclaiming, He who fold Smoke, dies by Smoke. By these Acts of Juslice, as well as many others of Mercy and Generofity, he gain'd the Affection and Admiration of all Men.

Amidst so many Virtues and Excellencies, this Emperor could not want a proportionable Degree of Religion, which was really Pagan, but not so pernicious to the true Religion as that of Antoninus Philosophus; for by means of his Mother Mamaa, he shew'd a particular Esteem for Christianity, and had the Images of Abraham and Fesus Christ in his Closet, where he perform'd his daily Devotions; but as a purblind Man, without full Knowledge, he plac'd Christ among Orpheus, Apollonius Tyanaus, and his other Deities. Tho' Alexander did not believe in Jesus Christ as a Saviour, yet he reverenc'd him as a Law-giver, whose Institutions excell'd all those of the Gentile Philosophers. That Command, on which all the Law and the Prophets depend, DO NOT THAT TO ANOTHER, WHICH YOU WOULD NOT HAVE ANOTHER DO TO YOU, he was so fond of, then when he punish'd any Man for Acts of Injustice, the Crier was commanded publickly to pronounce it in the Court; and that it might be the more regarded, he order'd it to be inscrib'd upon his Palace, his Courts of Judicature, and his publick Works and Buildings. He had fuch a good Opinion of Christianity, that he once design'd to erect a Temple to JESUS CHRIST in particular; but his Soothfayers hinder'd him by giving a Reason, which coming from a Pagan Author, is a noble Character of the Christian Faith, That if the Christians were ever publickly allowed to have Temples of their own, the Temples of the Roman Deities would be forfaken, and the Empire would foon embrace Christianity. Tho' this hinder'd the Emperor from building Churches to the Honour of Fesus Christ, he was not willing that any already built should be pull'd down. For when the Company of Victuallers complain'd that the Christians had built a Church upon a Piece of waste Ground, which they claim'd for themselves, he deny'd their Petition, deciding the Matter by his Rescript in these Words; It is better that God be there worshipped in any manner, than that the Place should be put to such Uses as they defign'd it for. The greatest Part of his Family were converted, and the Christians enjoy'd perfect Tranquility

quility during his Reign; in which Reign, it is mostly belived, the Christians began first to build their Churches in Enfeb. publick, and in the View of the People and Magistrates.

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In the first Year of the Emperor's Reign, Hippolytus a celebrated Bishop Arabia, and afterwards a Martyr, finish'd his remarkable Treatise concerning Easter, wherein he gave a kind of a Chronicle to the first Year of Alexander, and also a Paschal Cycle for sixteen Years. This Author was eminent for feveral Pieces, as particularly one concerning Antichrist, one concerning the Resurrection, and one against all Heresies; but for none more than his Commentaries upon the Holy Scriptures. These are said to have given Occasion to the great Origen to do the like, being particularly excited by his dear Friend Ambrofius, who not only importun'd him, but also furnish'd him with all Conveniencies necessary for such a Labour; allowing him befides his Maintenance, seven Notaries, and sometimes more, to attend upon him, who by Turns might take from his Mouth what he dictated, and as many Transcribers, besides Virgins employ'd for that purpole, who copy'd out fair what the others had halfily written. His Industry and Diligence in these Studies were incredible, few Parts of the Bible escaping his narrow and critical Re-searches; wherein he attain'd to so admirable an Accuracy and Perfection, that St. Ferom himself, who was not always civil to his Memory, profest, he could have been satisfied to have born that Load of Envy cast upon his Name, provided he had with it his Skill and Knowledge in the Scriptures. About these Times, and the second Year of Alexander, Califtus Bishop of Rome, after he had held that Dignity about five Years, was martyr'd in the City; undoubtedly without the Emperor's Knowledge. He was succeeded by Urbanus, a Roman, and Son of Pontianus, who continu'd in the See about eight Years, and was the fixteenth Bishop of Rome, after the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul.

A. D. 223. Alex.

A. D. 224. Alex.

. For the Space of two or three Years we find very A. D. little, either of Ecclesiastical or the Roman Affairs. The chief we find do relate to the indefatigable Studies of Ori- Alex, gen; who having made himself a most profound Master of Philosophy, as well as Divinity, now wrote in Defence of his Philosophical Studies, 'as well from the Usefulness Engel. of them, as from the Examples of Pantanus and Heraclas, now a Presbyter in Alexandria. But his Philosophical and unbounded Genius often transported him too

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far in his Writings, and made him afterwards advance feveral extravagant Notions, not to fay dangerous Errors; which made greater Noise in the Church, than any others fince the Beginning of Christianity. In the Year 228, he was sent by his Bishop Demetrius from Alexandria into Achaia in Greece, which was then disturb'd with divers Herefies, that over-ran the Churches in those Parts. He staid a confiderable Time at Athens, where, as Epiphanius tells ns, he frequented the Schools of the Philosophers, and convers'd with the Sages of that City. At Nicopolis near Actium, he found a new Version of the old Testament into Greek, which was done by some unknown Jew, and was the fifth Greek Version of the old Testament since our Saviour's Nativity. Origen afterwards joining this with the Version found at Jericho 11 Years before, and adding them to his Work call'd Tetrapla, mention'd A.D. 214. he compos'd his Hexapla, and his Octapla; which was a Bible confisting of all the Greek Versions, with the Hebrew Text in two diffinct Characters, and all plac'd in different Columns: A noble Work, and of fingular Use. In this Tourney to Achaia, as he pass'd through Palestine, he took Cæsarea in his Way, where producing his Letters of Recommendation from Demetrius, he was ordain'd Presbyter by Alexander Bishop of Ferusalem, and Theoctistus of Cafarea, he being now 43 Years of Age. Tho' this was intirely the Act of these two excellent Bishops, who delign'd only to add Authority to his Embassy, yet the Thing was highly refented by his Diocesan Demetrius, who envying his mighty Reputation, declar'd it was an Affront to his Jurisdiction, and a Contempt of his Power; and that he might not want Pretences, he condemn'd him now for the unnatural Action committed in his Youth, severely reflecting upon the Bishop who ordain'd him. However, Origen return'd peaceably to Alexandria, where he continu'd his Commentaries upon the Holy Scriptures. It was then that he publish'd his five Books of Commentaries upon the Gospel of St. John, eight Books upon Genesis, Commentaries upon the first five and twenty Psalms, and upon the Lamentations of Jeremiah, his Books de Principiis, and his Stromata.

In the same Year that Origen was ordain'd Priest, Philetus Bishop of Antioch dy'd, after he had held that Dignity 10 or 11 Years; and was succeeded by one Zebinus or Zehennus, who continu'd in the See about nine Years, and was the eleventh Bishop of Antioch after the Aposses,

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offles, In In the fame Year at Rome there hapned a dangerous and bloody Contest between the Emperor's Guards and the Dion. Citizens of Rome, upon the Account of that renown'd Civilian Ulpian, who being Commander of the Guards, vigoroufly endeavour'd to reform their many Corruptions; but the Soldiers growing too powerful, not only forc'd the Citizens to a Compliance by Fire, but pursu'd Ulpian into the Palace, and flew him in the Presence of the Emperor and his Mother; which put an End to the Contest. This Ulpian was chief Counsellor to the Emperor, and wrote many excellent Books upon several Subjects in the Law, out of which there are noble Excerpta still preserv'd in the Digests. In the following Year the celebrated Dion A. D. Cassius, having been Proconful of Africk for a few Years, and 229. now a fecond Time Conful, retir'd himfelf into the Pro- Alex. vince of Bithynia, where he wrote that great and excellent Work of his, the Roman History, of which we have a confiderable Part still remaining, and which sufficiently shews the extraordinary Abilities of the Author.

All this while Demetrius Bishop of Alexandria was not A. D. appeas'd, but continu'd to persecute Origen; and in a Coun- 230. cil which he assembled in the tenth Year of Alexander's A. D. Reign, it was ordain'd that Origen should quit Alexandria; 231. that he should neither be permitted to teach or live there Alex. any longer; but that nevertheless he should not be depriv'd of his Dignity of Priesthood. Origen being thus banish'd Enfeb. from Alexandria, refign'd the Government of his Cateche- yerom. tical School to his Colleague Heraclas, and retir'd to Ca- Phys. farea in Palestine, his ordinary Place of Refuge, where he was generously receiv'd by his Patron Theoctifus Bishop of that City, and Alexander Bishop of Jerusalem, who undertook to defend him, commission'd him publickly to expound the Scriptures, and heard him as if he had been their But Demetrius being not satisfy'd with the first Judgment against Origen, accus'd him of Heretical Principles in a second Council of the Bishops of Ægypt, and having caus'd him to be depriv'd of his Priesthood, and even to be excommunicated, he wrote at the same time to all Parts against him, to procure his being excluded the Communion of the Catholick Church. For when once a Priest was depos'd and excommunicated by his Bishop, with the Consent of the Bishops of the Province, he cou'd not without Reconciliation be admitted into any other Church. So that it is no Wonder, if all the Bishops in

the World, except those of Palestine, Arabia, Phanicia,

and Achaia, who were intimately acquainted with Origen, should consent to his Condemnation; and if the Bishop of Rome it self, having assembled his Clergy against him, did condemn him after the Example of his own Bishop. Nevertheless Origen found several Protectors, especially in Palestine, where he continu'd to explain the Scriptures at Cafaria, as formerly at Alexandria, with fo great a Reputation, that all forts of Persons, not only from that Province, but even from remote Countries, came to be his Disciples. The most famous were Gregory, afterwards furnamed Thanmaturgus, and his Brother Athenodorus, who afterwards returning to their own Country Pontus, both became Bishops, and prov'd eminent Lights, and Governors of the Church. Firmilian, afterwards Bishop of Cafarea in Cappadocia, was another; who had so great an Efteem for him, that he fometimes engaged him to come over into his Province for Edification of the Churches in those Parts, and other times went into Palestine to visit him, and to perfect himself by his Society and Conversation. His Enemy Demetrius liv'd not long after he had excommunicated him, but dy'd in the same Year, after he had held this Dignity 43 Years; and was succeeded by Heraclas, to whom Origen had left his School, who continu'd in this See about fixteen Years, and was the twelfth Bishop of Alexandria, after the Evangelist St. Mark. Heraclas left the Care of his Catechetical School to an eminent Priest call'd Dionysius; and tho' both these were Schohars and Friends of Origen, which caus'd the Heat against him to abate, yet he was always look'd upon as an excommunicated Person by the Agyptians, and the Sentence of Demetrius continu'd under his Successors. In this Retirement Origen compos'd his Hexapla and Octapla, went on with his Commentaries upon St. John, and began some upon Ezekiel and Ifaiab.

About the time of Origen's Retirement from Alexandria, it is believ'd that the Council of Iconium was call'd. which Enfebins briefly mentions in his 7th Book and 7th Chapter. This was affembled to determine a Controversie concerning the Validity of that Baptisin that was admini-Ared by the Montanists or Cataphrigians, and therein it was resolv'd, That all Baptism administred out of the Church was to be rejected, as had been done before in Cappadocia by immemorial Custom. All that we know further of this Council, is, that there were many Bishops at it from Cappadocia, Galatia, Cilicia, and the neighbour-

ing Provinces; and that Firmilian Bishop of Cappadocia, was none of the least eminent among them. In the following Year, and tenth of Alexander, Urbanus Bishop of Rome dy'd, by Martyrdom, as it's commonly believ'd, after he had held that Dignity about eight Years; and was fucceeded by Pontianus a Roman, and Son of Calphurnius, who continu'd in the See about five Years, and was the feventeenth Bishop of Rome after the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. In the same Year, 162 Years after the Destruction of Jerusalem, according to the Rabbins, the Jerusalem Talmud was begun and composed by R. Jochanan; which is a confus'd Heap of the extravagant and the wild Notions. Customs, and Traditions of the Jews in those Times. But it is so obscure, that the Jews of latter Times could make but little use of it; so that when they cite the Talmud. they ordinarily mean that of Babylon, written above three hundred Years after, and when they would denote the o-

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Alexander having now reign'd about ten Years, to the Lamp, general Satisfaction of all Men, was alarm'd by the Progress of Artaxerxes in the East, who having conquer'd Parthia, and restor'd the Persian Empire, began to invade the Roman Dominions. This caus'd Alexander to make all necessary Preparations to oppose this new Conqueror, and to go in Person against him; in which Expedition he observ'd the greatest Regularity and Discipline, maintaining fuch Order and Justice, and punishing Outrages and Misdemeanors with such Prudence and Severity, that his Camp feem'd a well-govern'd City, and a Sight of his Army was fufficient to give an Idea of the Grandeur of the Koman Empire. He was exceeding careful, that no Soldier should defrand another; so that if any Colonel or Captain detain'd the least Part of his Mens Allowance, he was condemn'd to inevitable Death; and once he discarded a whole Legion at a time, never fearing any Mutineers, because he knew they could object nothing against his Life and Management. If any of his Soldiers in their March near Gardens and Orchards, trespass'd upon the Owners, he commanded them to be beaten with Rods of Iron; or if the Dignity of the Person exempted him from fuch a Punishment, he publickly reprimanded him, and putting him in mind of the Christians Maxim, would fo-Temnly ask him, If he would willingly have been so served in his own Estate? By these Methods, and his innumerable Acts of Kindness and Condescention, with his ten-

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der Regard to the meanest of the Sick and wounded, he was infinitely valu'd and admir'd both by his own Soldiers and all the Countries through which he pass'd. In this manner Alexander advanc'd against the Persians; and during the time of the War, there pass'd many remarkable Skirmishes, 'till at length both Parties gathering together all their Forces, refolv'd to come to a general Battel; in which Alexander, by his Management, gain'd one of the greatest Victories that ever was known in the Empire, Artaxerxes with great Difficulty escaping with Life. There were flain in this Battel 10000 Horsemen, Foot-Men without Number, 200 Elephants, and 300 taken, as also 1000 armed Chariots, and an infinite Number of Prisoners of all Ranks and Qualities, as is evident from the Account which Alexander gave to the Senate after his Return to Rome. Tho' Herodian, who hated both him and his Mother for favouring Christianity, has given a different and detracting Account of these Wars. After this happy Victory, the Emperor without Refistance, recover'd all those Countries that Artaxerxes had taken from the Romans; and passing through the Body of Mesopotamia, he enlarg'd the Bounds of the Empire, took the Cities Ctefiphon and

234. Alex.

Babylon, subdu'd Part of Arabia, and then return'd to Antioch in Syria. Having establish'd Peace in the East, he re-A. D. turn'd to Rome, where he triumph'd on September 25, with great Solemnity. His Chariot was drawn by four Elebhants, and the whole Senate, Knights and People, with 12 13. an infinite Throng of Women and Children, attended him from the Capitol to the Palace, crying, Now Rome is safe, fince Alexander is safe! The following Day was spent in the Games of the Cirque, and the Diversions of the Stage; at which Time the Emperor gave a Largess to the People, and establish'd Pensions for the Maintenance of poor Children, in Imitation of the Antoninus's, calling them by the Name of Mamaans, in Honour of his excellent Mother

Mamaa.

Lamp Herod. &c.

This admirable Emperor continu'd but a short Time in Rome, before he was disturb'd by the Revolt of the Germans, who joining with other Northern Nations, had pass'd the Rhine and the Danube, with such Fury and Numbers, that all Italy was in a great Consternation. Upon Notice of which, Alexander made what Levies he could and to the mighty Regret of the whole City, went in Person to stem this furious Torrent. Tho' the Emperor met with much Success against these barbarous Nations,

Chap. IV. MAXIMINUS the 26th Rom. Emp.

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yet he met with more barbarous Usage from the standing Legions encamp'd about Moguntia or Mentz, which had been abominably corrupted in the Reign of Elagabalus, and ever fince train'd up in all kinds of Rapines and Diforders. Alexander could neither endure their insolent Outrages, nor they his regular Discipline: but more especially they exclaim'd against the exceeding Penuriousness of his Mother Mamaa, who was then, as at other times, with him in the Camp. These Insolencies increasing on one Side, and the Emperor's Strictness on the other, the Soldiers being excited by a famous old Soldier call'd Maximinus, resolv'd upon his Death; which they shortly after effected in his Tent, together with that of his Mother Mamaa. Thus dy'd this admirable Prince, by the Hands of a profligate and irreclaimable Army, to the infinite Grief of the Roman People; who not only deify'd him, and bestow'd a most magnificent Funeral upon him, but also appointed that his Birth-day should be kept very religiously, and it was observed for many Years after. Alexander dy'd on the 19th Day of March, under the Confulships of Severus and Quintianus, being about twenty nine Years of Age, and having reign'd thirteen Years and nine Days.

Upon the Death of Alexander, the Soldiers made A. D. choice of Maximinus, who had been the chief Promoter 235. of the Murder, and swore him Emperor. Maximinus MAXIimmediately join'd his Son Maximus with him, allowing MINUS, him equal Power and Authority; but the Senate and Peo- the 26th ple of Rome utterly refused to confirm their Election, and Roman continu'd in that Resolution; so that Maximinus was the first Roman Emperor, to whom Historians give that Title, Herod. who was elected without the Consent of the Senate. Maximinus was now 62 Years of Age, a Person of the meanest Extraction, barbarous by Descent, sprung from a Goth and Alane, who from a poor Herdsman of Thrace, by his monstrous Stature, prodigious Strength, and brutish Valour, gain'd several military Posts, and at length the Empire of the World. He was eight Foot and an half in Height; had Joints so large, that his Wife's Bracelet would ferve him for a Thumb-Ring; a Stomach fo strong, that he ordinarily eat 40 Pounds of Flesh, and drunk fix Gallons of Wine; and a Strength so extraordinary, that he was able to turn and draw loaden Wains, to strike out a Horse's Teeth with his Fist, kill him with a Kick, and VOL. II

cleave young Trees with his Hands. Besides, he was of a Temper fo bold and couragious, fo fierce and prefumptuous, that relying upon his vast Bulk and Strength, he neither fear'd nor regarded any Man in the World. So that Capitolinus truly faid of him, ' Never did a more Seeing himself adcruel Beast tread upon the Earth. vanc'd to fo high a Station, he immediately shew'd the utmost Extent of his Authority; and first he put to Death all fuch as had been intimate with Alexander, and then banish'd an infinite Number of others, not allowing any Commander or Senator that had been advanc'd by him. And because he was much asham'd of the Meanness of his Extract, he commanded all fuch as well knew him and his Parents to be flain; tho' many of them had reliev'd both him and his Parents in the Time of their low Condition. He commanded many of the most illustrious Persons of Rome to be flain, so that the Senate and People flood in great Fear of him, being ready to tremble at his Name; and both Men and Women made folemn Vows and Prayers to their Gods, That he might never fet Foot in their City.

In a fhort time the insupportable Behaviour of this Tyrant caus'd Magnus a Consular Person, to conspire with many of Alexander's old Soldiers, and some others, to break down a Bridge as foon as Maximinus had pass'd it, and abandon him to the Enemy. But this was foon difcover'd; tho' some think the whole Project was invented by Maximinus, to colour over his Cruelties, which he executed to fo high a Degree, that he caus'd above 4000 to be flain, upon pretence of their being concern'd in this Shortly after, a great Number of Alexander's old Soldiers mutined; and withdrawing themselves from the Camp, proclaim'd one Quartianus or Ticus, for Emperor, who had lately been remov'd from his Charge. The Soldiers conftrain'd him to accept of the Empire, which he upon sufficient Grounds refus'd; for Macedonius, who had been the chief Promoter of his Advancement, within a few Days after murder'd him in his Bed, and carried his Head to Maximinus, who first kindly received him, and then put him to a cruel Death, punithing him for his Treason to his Sovereign, and his Treachery to his Friend. With these Successes the Cruelty and Tyranny of Maximinus encreased; but shortly after he was diverted by his Wars against the Germans, whom he overthrew in several Battels, wasted all their Country with Fire and Sword

Sword for above 400 Miles together, and threatned to Subdue all the Northern Nations as far as the Ocean; and had his general Carriage been answerable to his Courage, he might probably have enjoy'd Time and Opportunity to have perform'd all. In the Time of these Wars began the Sixth Persecution of the Church, after it had enjoyed about 24 Years rest, from the End of the Fifth, under Severus and Caracalla.

CHAP. V.

From the Beginning of the Sixth general Persecution of the Church, to the End of the Seventh, begun and ended under the Emperors Decius and Gallus.

Containing the Space of about 18 Years.

The SIXTH GENERAL PERSECUTION.

N the midst of so much Cruelty and Bloodshed, it A. D. is no wonder if the Emperor Maximinus set him- 235. felf to persecute the Christians; especially since they Maxi. had met with so much Favour from his Predecessor. This is generally call'd The Sixth general Persecution; Enfeb. tho' Sulpitius Severus admits not this into the Number, &c. and therefore makes no more than nine Pagan Persecutions, peculiarly referving the Tenth for the Times of Antichrist. But Eusebius expressly affirms, that Maximinus stirr'd up a Persecution against the Christians, and that out of Hatred to his Predecessor, in whose Family many Christians had found Shelter and Patronage; but that it was almost wholly levell'd against the Bishops and Ministers of the Church, as the prime Pillars and Propagators of Christianity. Whence Firmilian, Bishop of Cappadecia, in his Letter to St. Cyprian, says of it, That it was not a general, but a local Persecution, that rag'd in some particular Places, and especially in that Province where he liv'd, Serenianus the President driving the Christians out of all those Countries. He adds, that many dreadful Earthquakes happening in those Parts, whereby whole Ci-

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ties and Towns were fwallow'd up, much increas'd the Persecution; it being usual with the Pagans, if a Famine or Pestilence, an Earthquake or Inundation happen'd, immediately to turn their Rage against the Christians, concluding them the Causers of those Calamities. And this Origen meant when he tells us in his Homilies, that he knew some Places overturn'd with Earthquakes, the Cause whereof the Heathens cast upon the Christians, for which their Churches were burnt to the Ground; and that not only the common People, but the wifer Sort among them, did not stick openly to affirm, That these Things came for the sake of the Christians. About the Beginning of this Persecution the Emperor Maximinus and his Son exhibited some magnificent Sports, and gave a Donative to the Soldiers, which whoever receiv'd, was oblig'd to come up to the Tribune with a Laurel Crown upon his Head. Among these Soldiers, a Christian, more scrupulous than ordinary, brought his Crown in his Hand; and being ask'd the Reason of his not wearing it upon his Head, made Answer, That he could not because he was a Christian. Upon which, he was publickly accus'd, stript of all his military Ornaments, most cruelly scourg'd, and then cast into Prison, hourly expecting Martyrdom. The rest of the Christian Soldiers took Offence at his over nice Singularity, as giving the common Enemy too just a Provocation to vent their Rage against them. But this Action coming to the Ears of Tertullian, now old and more rigid than ever, he immediately fet about to defend this Soldier, and wrote his Book De Corona Militis, ' wherein he ex-' toll'd the Act as an heroick Piece of Zeal and Christian Magnanimity, not only lawful and warrantable, but hoonourable, just and necessary; and with an Air of mighty Assurance maintain'd, that it was absolutely prohibited to the Christians to crown themselves, and even to bear Arms. Shortly after, he wrote his Book concern-

A. D. 'give any Mony not to be perfecuted.

Tho' this Perfecution was very fevere in fome Places.

Tho' this Perfectation was very severe in some Places, Maxi. yet we have the Names but of a few Martyrs. The chief of them was Pontianus, who after he had been about five Years Bishop of Rome, for his free reproving the Roman Idolatry, was banish'd into the Island Sardinia, where he shortly

ing Flight in time of Persecution, which is a further Mark of the extream Rigour of Tertullian: For there he positively maintain'd 'That Christians were absolutely prohibited.

Chap. V. MAXIMINUS the 26th Rom. Emp.

shortly after dy'd or was slain. He was succeeded by Anteros a Grecian, the Son of Romulus, who by his extraordinary Care in collecting the Acts of the Martyrs, exasperated the Government, and it is faid, caus'd himself to be made a Martyr, after he had held this Dignity forty Days. After his Decease, Eusebius informs us, that when many were Competitors for this See, a Roman called Fabian, coming out of the Country by Chance into the Assembly, by means of the Descent of a Dove upon his Head, was unanimously chosen Bishop; the People looking upon that unusual Accident as the particular Direction of Heaven. He held this Dignity for about 14 Years, and was the 19th Bishop of Rome after the Apostles St. Peter and St. About the same time Origen was very industrious in supporting Mens Spirits against the Mischiefs of Persecution, and understanding that his dear Friend Ambrofius, and Protoctetus Presbyter of Casarea, had been brought before the Emperor, and undergone Imprisonment for their noble Confession of the Faith, he wrote his Piece concerning Martyrdom, ' directing it immediately to them, and exhorting them not only to part from all their Eflates, but even their Lives for the fake of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, contrary to the Notions of Tertullian, he conceal'd himself during this Persecution, and retir'd for some time to the City of Athens, where he finished his Commentaries upon Ezekiel, and proceeded with his Commentaries upon the Song of Solomon, which he finish'd when he return'd to Cafarea, from whence he went afterwards to Casarea in Cappadocia, where he remain'd for some Space with Firmihan, who invited him thither. During this Retirement of Origen, Zebinus Bishop of Antiochdy'd, after he had held that Dignity about nine Years; and was A. D. succeeded by the famous Babylas, a brave and prudent Pilot, who in the midst of the greatest Storms guided that Church about 12 Years together, and was the 12th Bishop of Antioch after the Apostles.

And now the Church of God again found Rest; which Hered. was occasioned more by the Confusions that were in the Capitol. Empire, than the Disposition of the Governors. For most of the Provinces groaning under the Burden of a Tyrant, Africk first shew'd its Detestation of him, and set up an eminent old Man near 80 Years of Age, nam'd Gordian, then Proconful of the Province, who together with his Son Gordian, were immediately confirm'd in the Empire by the Roman Senate, and Maximinus and his Son de-

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clar'd Enemies and Rebels to the State. This was fucceeded by many Executions and Cruelties in Rome against the Friends of Maximimis, and Orders were given to remove all his Governors, which were observed in most Provinces; but as in some the Governors were flain, so in others the Senate's Messengers; so that there was Blood shed in all Parts, and the Cfuelties of Maximinus made all Men cruel. Gordian was proclaim'd in the Middle of May; but before he had enjoy'd his Empire two Months. Capellanus Governor of Namidia, joytling with Maximimas's Interest, march'd against his Son, overthrew him. and flew him; which occasion'd the poor old Emperor to end his Life with his Girdle. In the mean time Maximimus was coming against Rome, like a raging Lion, breathing out Destruction to all Opposers, which caus'd the Senate to meet with great Solemnity at the Temple of Japiter, and on the oth of July, they chose two worthy Commanders, ham'd Maximus and Balbinus, and made them Emperors conjointly. This Election was succeeded by new Mischiefs in Rome; for the Arrival of some Spies from Muximinus, rais'd fuch Tuthults and Contells between the Pratorian Soldiers and the Citizens, that after feveral Attacks, Slaughters and Cruelties, the City it self was fet on fire by the Soldiers, and a great Part of it confum'd. The Roman Empire also felt the Vengeance of Heaven for the Blood of the Christians; for during this Reign, neither the City of Rome; nor the Provinces, were free from Wars, Tumults, Mutders, Robbeties, and all matther of Calamities. In the Beginning of the Year 238, Maximinus cross'd the Alps into Italy, and belieg'd Aquilein, where he met with an unexpected Opposition, and many Difficulties and Disappointments. Here his Cruelties and Mis-managements render'd him both odious and despicable, infomuch that his own Soldiers at length set upon him in his Teht, and flew both him and his Son, fent their Heads to the Senate at Rome, and left their Bodies to be devour'd by Dogs, and Birds of Prey. This was the deferv'd End of an Usurper, Tyrant and Persecutor, who dy'd in the End of the Month March, under the Consulships of Ulpius and Pontianus, being about 65 Years of Age, and having reign'd, or rather continu'd in his Usurpation, three Years and a few Days.

A. D. II. Upon the Death of Maximinus and his Son, Max-238. imus and Balbinus continu'd Emperors without Contradiction, C-

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ction, having been created by the Senate above nine MAX. Months before. They began their Reign with a happy & BAL. Establishment of Peace in the Empire, govern'd all things the 27th well and wisely, made several good Ordinances, and Emp. gain'd the Love of all Men in general. Only the Prato-Herod. rian Soldiers were highly affronted at the Manner of their &c. Election, as being made by the Senate without their Concurrence; and finding themselves in danger of losing their darling Power of making Emperors, they foon refolv'd upon the Death of these Persons. Yet still they might have fecuted themselves by the Help of the Citizens and their new German Guards, had not their own private Jealousies made way for their Ruin; which, notwithstanding their Age and Experience, gain'd such an Ascendant upon their Minds, that they kept their distinct Guards, and in a manner flood upon their Defence against each other. The Prætorian Soldiers soon made their Advantage of these Divisions, and at a Time when the Capitoline Games were celebrated in Rome, and the Emperors weakly guarded, they enter'd the Palace with great Fury, divested the Emperors of their Robes, and hal'd them like two Criminals through the midst of the City towards the Camp. But understanding that a considerable Force was hastning after them to their Rescue, to put an end to all further Contests, they flew them both, and left their Bodies in the Streets. This happed upon the 15th Day of July, these Emperors having reign'd a Year and fix Days, fince their first Creation by the Senate, and but a little above three Months from the Death of the last Emperor Maximinus.

The Soldiers, after they had committed this Murder, by Accident met with young Gordian, Grandson to the old GOR-Emperor of that Name, whom they immediately faluted DIAN, by the Title of Augustus and Emperor, and accordingly the 28th proclaim'd him their Sovereign. Being thus chosen by Roman the Pratorian Soldiers, the Senate and People, seeing no Emperor, Remedy against their pretended Authority, readily con-Capitol, firm'd their Election; for he was generally belov'd in the City, upon the Account of the Memory of the two former Gordians; And from this Election, there enfu'd an amicable Correspondence between the Soldiers and Citizens. Gordian was now but thirteen or fourteen Years of Age, but of an ancient and illustrious Family; of a very fweet and docible Disposition, and so studious and inclinable to Learning, that we are affur'd that he had 62000 Books in his Library. He so much follow'd the Councils of wise

and worthy Men, that tho' he was naturally prone to Vice and Senfuality, they foon form'd him into an excellent Prince and Governor. He wanted no Qualification of a Governor, but Age; and by his mild and prudent Behaviour he so much gain'd the Affections of all Men, that the Soldiers call'd him their Child, the Senate their Son, d

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and the People their Joy and Delight.

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The Church was free from Persecution in all this, and the fucceeding Reign, which gave an Opportunity to Pope Fabian to re-gain the Christian Commeteries, and to make a Collection of the Acts of the Martyrs, according to the Design of his Predecessor Anteros. These Times also gave an Opportunity to Origen to re-assume his School in Cafarea in Palestine; about which time the famous Gregory of Neocasarea, having been his Scholar for five Years, was now re-call'd to his own Country, together with his Brother Athenodorus. Gregory being to take his leave, made an excellent Oration before his Master and a numerous Auditory, 'wherein he gave a wonderful Character of Origen, and elegantly bewail'd his Departure from his School, as a kind of Banishment out of Paradice. At his Return to Neocasarea, Origen follow'd him with a Letter, 'commending his excellent Parts, able to render ' him either an eminent Lawyer among the Romans, or a renown'd Philosopher among the Greeks, but especially perswading him to improve them to the Ends of Chri-'stianity, and the Promotion of Virtue and Piety. All Mens Eyes were upon him at Neocasarea, expecting the extraordinary Fruits of his Studies, tho' the Place was miferably overgrown with Superstition and Idolatry; but instead of answering their Expectations, he retir'd to the Wilderness, and resign'd himself up to Solitude and Contemplation. In which Place he was miraculously confecrated Bishop of Neocasarea, by Phadimus Bishop of Amasea, a neighbouring City. After which, he not only made great Numbers of Converts, but is faid to have wrought many Miracles, of which are mention'd in particular his expelling Damons out of a Pagan Temple, his stopping adreadful Plague by his Prayers, his drying up a Lake, and putting an End to an implacable Quarrel, his restraining the Overflowings of the River Lycus, with several others; upon the Account of which, he afterwards obtain'd the Sirname of Thaumaturgus, or the Worker of Miracles. Tho' these are confidently related by St. Gregory Nyssen and St. Bafil, who liv'd but an hundred Years after, yet they are doubted

A. D. 239. Gordi.

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doubted by several learned Men; for which Reason we have been the less particular in relating them. Yet at the fame time it must be acknowledg'd that Miracles were not then ceased, especially in Places over-run with Paganism, as Neocasarea was. Not long after Gregory's Ad- A. D. vancement in Neocæsarea, there appear'd a new Sort of 240. Hereticks in the Church called Valefians, from Valefius an Gordi. Arabian. They made all their Followers Eunuchs, either by Perswasion or Force, and often did the same to other Men, when they could meet with them conveniently. They also maintain'd other Errors, and rejected the Law and the Prophets; and were known in the Time of Epi-

phanius.

In the mean Time, the Emperor Gordian, who had Capital. reigned fuccessfully about two Years, was extreamly disturb'd by Sabinianus Commander in Africk, who proclaimed himself Emperor. But the Governor of Mauritania, by Gordian's Order, marching against him, he was seized by his own Men; who by bringing him to Carthage, and delivering him into the Hands of the Emperor's Officers, obtain'd Pardon for their Offence. This Insurrection caus'd Gordian to strengthen his Interest several Ways, but A. D. more especially by the Alliance of Missitheus the Præsect and Instructor, whom he so much honour'd for his great Gordi. Wisdom and Learning, that he marry'd his Daughter, tho' but of an ordinary Family; and the Authority and Management of this Person added much to his Success and Prosperity. The last Year and this were attended with strange Accidents and Calamities, such as drove the Romans into great Fears, and superstitious Projects: The first was an unusual Eclipse of the Sun, which made Noon-Day as dark as Midnight; the fecond was fuch a terrible Earthquake, that many Cities and Towns of the Empire were swallow'd up and destroy'd. These put the Romans upon confulting the Books of the Sibyls, and occasion'd great Number of Sacrifices not only in the City of Rome, but generally all over the World, as Capitolinus expresses it. Gordian having reign'd four Years, was alarm'd with A. D. News from the East, that the mighty Sapores King of Persia, who succeeded his Brother Artaxerxes, had success- Gordi. fully invaded the Roman Empire, over-run Syria, and taken and plunder'd Antioch it self. Upon this Gordian caus'd the Temple of Janus to be open'd, and left Rome with a powerful Army; and marching by Land from Italy, he first passed through Masia, to stop the Progress of

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the Goths, and other barbarous Nations, which came down like a Torrent to inhabit Thrace; against whom he obtain'd some Victories, and left those Provinces in a peaceable Condition. From thence he pass'd over into the lesfer Asia and Syria, where he had many Encounters with Supores, and obtaining several Victories, he soon recover'd Antioch; and proceeding further, he took the Cities Nisbis and Carrie from the Perfians: For Sapores being difcouraged by the first Battels, soon abandon'd the Koman

Empire, and retir'd into his own Country.

During these Transactions in the State, Beryllus Bishop of Bostra in Arabia, broach'd some dangerous Errors, afferting that our Saviour before his Incarnation, had no proper Sublistence, no personal Deity, but only a derivative Divinity from the Father afterwards. The Bishops of those Parts met about it, but could not reclaim his Errors; whereupon the Affistance of the great Origen was requested, who went from Casarea, and treated with him both in private Conferences, and in publick Synods, 0rigen's greatest Difficulty was to find out the true Meaning of the Person, which when he had once discover'd, he attack'd him with fuch cogent Reasonings and Demonstrations, that he was oblig'd to quit his Hold, recant his Errors, and return back to the Church. The Records of all that pass'd in this Affair were preserv'd till the Time of Eusebius. After Origen was returned back to Cafarea, Beryllus shewing himself a true Convert, in several Letters gave Thanks to him for his kind Pains in his Conviction, kiffing the Hand that thus brought him back.

And now all the good Fortune of the Emperor Gordian began to forfake him; which was occasion'd by the studden Death of his Father-in-law Misitheus, and the Advancement of a valiant Arabian call'd Philip, into his Places of Pratorian Præfect, and General of the Army. Philip feeing himfelf so potent, and being fwell'd with the Hopes of the Empire, refolv'd to venture all to obtain it; in order to which, he used the utmost Artifices and Methods of Treachery to bring Gordian into Difgrace with his own Soldiers. Which at length prov'd fo effe-Aual, that the Soldiers by Force made Philip his Equal in the Empire, and likewise gave him the Title of his Tutor and Governor. Gordian patiently submitted to this impudent Determination, which caus'd Philip to become more insolent and imperious, so that by means of the other's Youth, and the Army's Fayour, he began to act as

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243. Gordi.

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fole Emperor. But Gordian being unable to endure this extravagant Incroachment, affembled the Army, and openly expostulated with his Men concerning this strange Usage: But Philip so subtilly and successfully manag'd his Affairs, that the poor young Emperor was displac'd. abandon'd by all, and reduc'd to that Extremity, that he fent to entreat Philip That he would please to allow him the Dignity of Cæsar; but that not being granted, he then defired to be his Prætorian Præfect: Which being likewise deny'd, he at last requested to be one of his Gaptains as long as he liv'd. At this Petition Philip's cruel Mind somewhat relented; but however afterwards confidering how much Gordian was belov'd in most Parts of the Empire. both for his Family and Virtues, he commanded him to be slain. This hapned on the Borders of Persia in the Month of March, under the Consulships of Peregrinus and Amilian, Gordian being now in the 20th Year of his Age, and having reign'd five Years, and eight or nine Months.

Thus Philip succeeded in his Wickedness, and was A. D. fo fortunate, as to be acknowledg'd Emperor both by the 244-Army, and the Senate; and he took his Son Philip, tho' PHILIP but a Child of about fix or feven Years of Age, for his Roman Companion in the Empire. Julius Philippus was now a- Emperer. bout forty Years of Age, and was by Birth an Arabian of Trachonitis, of dishonourable Parentage, his Father being a notorious Captain of Robbers in that Country. He was bred up in the Wars among the Roman Armies, from whence he learnt Experience and Valour, and from his own Country Treachery and Cruelty. Yet notwithstanding his unjustifiable Actions, many Authors, have declar'd him a Christian, and confequently the first Christian Emperor of Rome; but several later Criticks have utterly disbeliev'd it. The Authorities of the former feem to us to out-balance the Reasons of the latter; so that we are inclinable to think him a Christian, but withal acknowledge him to have been an immoral and wicked Man, weak and imperfect in his Religion, if not heretical in his Principles. Philip shortly after his Election, made a difhonourable Peace with the Persians, and returned to Antioch; where upon the Vigils of Easter, he and his Em- chr. Al. press attempted to enter into the Christian Church, to par- chrys. take of the Prayers of the Congregation: But the holy Enfet. Babylas, Bishop of the City, well knowing his late Crimes, couragioufly

couragiously withstood him, and laying his Hand upon his Heart, pronounc'd him Unworthy to enter into the Sheepfold of Jesus Christ, and declar'd That he should have no Admittance, unless he made a general Confession of his Sins, and was plac'd among the Number of the Penitents. To all which, it is faid, the Emperor humbly fubmitted, and demonstrated in his Deeds, the Sincerity and Devoutness of his Affection towards the Majesty of Heaven. It is uncertain whether it was upon the Account of this Action or some other, that Origen wrote a Letter both to Philip and his Empress; which Letters St. Jerom says, were extant in his Time. And Eusebius adds, that the Church of God very much flourish'd and encreas'd under the Reign of this Emperor; and Pope Fabian sent many Bishops and Pastors into Gaul, as Denis to Paris, Saturnius to Tholouse, Trophimus to Arles, Paul to Narbonne, Gratian to Tours, Austremion to Clermont, and Martial to Limoges. The Emperor, to shew his Morality, when he return'd to Rome, made many good Laws to reform the Vices of the Place, which Alexander himself could not effect. Particularly, he restrain'd the open and scandalous Actions of Sodomites; and depriv'd the Poets of their Titles and Privileges, because they then corrupted good Manners, and often tarnish'd the Reputations of good Men. So that Philip seem'd to endeavour to attone for all his former Errors.

August.

A. D.

245.

Philip

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About the beginning of this Reign, or before, Tertullian in the main forfook the Montanists or Cataphrygians, but his Age and Opinions would not permit him to return to the Church; so that from an Heretick, he became an Herefiarch, kept his separate Meeting at Carthage, and form'd a Sect call'd by the Name of Tertullianists, who continu'd in that City till St. Augustin's Time. They condemn'd fecond Marriages, and held all the rigid Principles of Tertullian, with the Traduction of the Soul; but they denied the wild Revelations and Prophecies of Montanus. Tertullian lived not long after his Separation from the Montanists, but dy'd very old and decripit, as St. Ferom informs us, being probably about 90 Years of Age. He was a Man of an acute Wit and Keenness, and admirably skill'd in all Parts of Learning, yet his Stile was for the most part abrupt, rugged and obscure, but at the same Time fublime and masculine, carrying a commanding and majestick Eloquence along with it. His Excellencies were almost beyond Comparison; so that his Fall was highly

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to be lamented by the Church. But if we take all his Writings, Actions and Temper together, it is hard to determine whether there was most Good or Ill in his Life, or whether he did most Service or Dis-service to the Church in General. Not long after the Death of Tertulian, in A. D. the same City of Carthage, the famous Cyprian was converted from the Pagan to the Christian Religion; princi- Philip pally by the means of Cacilius a Presbyter of Carthage, which occasioned him to assume his Name, and ever after to love him as a Friend, and reverence him as a Father. Cyprian had a most liberal and polite Education, and was so remarkable for his Eloquence and Oratory, that he publickly taught it in Carthage with great Reputation and Applause; living then in great Pomp and Splendor, and never going abroad without a Crowd of Clients and Followers. But inclining to Christianity, and becoming a Catechumen, he profest a severe Temperance and Sobriety, accounting it one of the best Preparations for the Entertainment of the Truth, to subdue and mortifie all irregular Appetites. Immediately after his Baptism, he sold most of his plentiful Estate, and distributed it among the Poor, at once triumphing over the Love of the World, and exercifing the great Duty of Mercy and Charity; fo that by the speedy Progress of his Piety, says Pontius, he became almost a perfect Christian, before he had learnt the Rules of Christianity. He liv'd but thirteen Years after his Conversion: but in that short Space, by his Writings and Actions, he shew'd himself to be one of the most eminent and shining Lights of the Age.

Still Origen, tho' an excommunicated Person, preserved English. his Reputation in several Parts of the World; and tho' he was 60 Years of Age, it did not hinder him from carrying on his Works with as great Diligence as ever. For he did not only compose several Books in his Study, but he almost every Day made Discourses to the People of Cafarea, and most commonly without any Time to prepare them, which nevertheless were so highly esteemed, that the Transcribers took them down, and afterwards publish'd them. The good Success which Origen lately A. D. had in Arabia in the Cause of Beryllus, rendred him celebrated in those Parts, and his Assistance was now again defired upon a like Occasion. For a fort of Hereticks then appear'd, who affirmed, That at Death both Body and Soul expir'd together, and were resolv'd into the same State of Corruption, and that at the Refurrection they should re-

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Philip

vive,

vive, and rife together to eternal Life. For this purpose a general Synod of those Parts was call'd, and Origen defir'd to be present at it, who manag'd the Cause with such weighty Arguments, and unanswerable Reasons, that the adverse Party were oblig'd to throw down their Weapons, and relinquish their Sentiments. He likewise successfully combated against another impious and heretical Sect, call'd the Helcefaitæ, the Followers of Elxai, of whom we have given Account in the Year 114. About the same time Origen's Scholar Heraclas Bishop of Alexandria dy'd, after he had held this Dignity about 16 Years, and after a long Vacancy, was succeeded by another of his Scholars, the celebrated Dionysius, who was then Master of the great Catechetical School. This Dionyfius was a most learned and excellent Man, and worthily fill'd the See about 17 Years, being the 14th Bishop of Alexandria, after the Evangelist St. Mark. In the same Year the renowned Cyprian was made Presbyter in Carthage, in which Office he so admirably behav'd himself, that in the following Year A. D. upon the Death of Donatus Bishop of the Place, he was by a great Majority chosen in his Room. But his great Modesty and Humility made him sly from the first Approaches of the News, judging himself unfit for so weighty and honourable an Imployment, and defiring that a more worthy Person, and some of his Seniors in the Faith might possess the Place. But this would by no means satisfie the People, who crowded his Doors, and block'd up all Passages of Escape; which made him endeavour to fly out of the Window; but finding it in vain, he unwillingly yielded, the People impatiently waiting, divided between Hope and Fear, 'till feeing him come forth, they receiv'd

Entrop. Pictor. &cc.

248.

Philip

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In the fourth Year of this Emperor's Reign, which was just a thousand Years after the Building of the City, Phihip order'd the Celebration of the famous Secular Games, as it were folemnizing the Birth-Day of the City of Rome. Mon. Pagi observes that this was the ninth and last Time they were exhibited in Rome, and the fifth fince our Saviour's Nativity. And this Emperor took care to celebrate them with greater Pomp and Magnificence than ever had been known before, by reason of the solemn Commemoration of the Building of the City. In the Circus Maximus were hunted, baited, and encounter'd infinite Numbers of all Kinds of strange Beasts; two thousand Gladiators were match'd, who flew each other to give the Spe-**Ctators**

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him with an universal Joy and Satisfaction.

Stators Delight; and in Pompey's Theatre were fuch Variety of Shews and Games, as lasted three Days and as many Nights, without Intermission; where was such an innumerable Company of Lights, that the People could fee at Midnight as well as at Noon-Day. But towards the latter End of these famous Sports, Pompey's Theatre accidentally took fire, and the greatest Part of that glorious Edifice was confum'd, together with some other magnificent Buildings near it. Philip's Celebration of these Games makes him look very unlike a Christian, or at least like a very bad one; yet his purging the City afterwards, and suppressing of Vice, as we have formerly hinted, was agreeable enough to one of that Profession. Which has occasion'd some to report that he was converted immediately after the Secular Games, and baptiz'd by Pope Fabian, which is a Thing more uncertain than his being a Chri-Stran.

About this Time, Origen, remitting nothing of his incredible Industry, at the Request of his Friend Ambrofius, undertook an Answer to the Book of Celsus against the Christians; who being an Epicurean Philosopher, and of great Parts and Learning, had of all the Heathens used the most subtle Arguments, and propos'd them with the great- Enfeb. est Malice and Solidity. To this Man Origen return'd a

full Answer in eight Books, 'Wherein he by convincing Proofs establish'd the Truth of the History of Jesus * Christ, his several Miracles, his Divinity and Resurrecti-He confuted all the Calumnies and Impostors of

" Celsus, and of the other Pagans against the Christians; and at length prov'd the Truth and Excellency of the Doctrine and Religion of Jefus Christ. All which he wrote with fo much Politeness, Clearness, and Accuracy, that were there nothing else to tellifie the Abilities of this great Man, this Book alone would be fufficient. And it is believ'd not only to be the best of Origen's Works, but also the most excellent and most compleat Apology for the Christians that we have among all the Ancients. At this time there was sufficient Occasion for Apologies; for now a dreadful Storm hung over the Church, threatning its intire Destruction. This first appear'd in Alexandria, without the Knowledge of the Emperor, occasion'd by the Instigation of a certain Gentile Priest, or Magician, who finding the People prone to Superstition, excited them to revenge the Quarrel of their Gods. The Multitude once rais'd, ran on with uncontroulable Fury, accounting Cru-

A. D. 249. Philip

elty to the Christians, the only Instance of Piety to their Gods. Immediately they laid Hands upon one Metrus, an aged Man, who refusing to blaspheme his Saviour, they beat him with Clubs, prick'd him in the Face and Eyes with sharp Reeds, and afterwards ston'd him. Next, they seiz'd on a Woman nam'd Quinta, whom they carry'd to their Temple, where for refusing to worship their Idol, she was dragg'd by the Feet through the Streets over sharp Flints, dash'd against Mill-stones, scourg'd with Whips, and dispatch'd by the same Death with the other. Apollomia an ancient and eminent Virgin, being apprehended, had all her Teeth dash'd out, and was threatned to be burnt alive, who only begging a little Respite, of her own Accord chearfully leapt into the Flames. They in all Places broke open Christians Houses, taking away the best of their Goods, and burning the rest; and a Christian could not flir out Day nor Night, but they immediately cry'd out, Away with him to the Fire. In which Manner they continu'd, 'till by Seditions among themselves, they fell into new Contests, and gave the Christians a little breathing Time from the Pursuits of their Malice and Inhumanity.

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In the mean time the Roman Empire began to be punish'd by Famines, Plagues and other Calamities; and Philip himself was in no small Trouble upon the Account of the Goths Invations, and the Rebellion of his Army, which he fent against them, who set up their Commander Marinus for Emperor. Philip in great Fear complaining to the Senate of this Presumption, his Successor Decius with much Assurance declar'd, That Marinus's Ambition wou'd shortly be his Ruin, which prov'd true; for within a few Days after the same Army that chose Marinus, being diffatisfy'd, flew him. Upon Notice of this, Philip remembring the Prediction of Decius, gave him the Command of the Army against the Goths, with an Augmentation of Men, Mony, and Provisions Decius was a Man of uncommon Wisdom and Experience, and sufficient for the Discharge of that Trust; so that when he arriv'd at the Camp, all the Soldiers as well for the Worth of his Person, as the Fear of Punishment for their former Crime, refolv'd to chuse him Emperor; and by meer Constraint oblig'd him to take upon him that Title and Dignity. Decius seeing himself thus unexpectedly advanc'd, for his future Security sent a secret Messenger to acquaint Philip, That being compell'd by his Army, he had unwillingly assumed the Name of Emperor, but that he still accounted him

him his Sovereign; assuring him, that as soon as he could get Liberty, he would utterly renounce that Title and Pretensions of Power. But Philip was too well acquainted with treacherous Projects, to rely upon fuch Pretences and Promises; therefore in a great Rage, he resolv'd to march against him in Person. In order to which, he made use of many standing Legions and new Levies, threatning with many Imprecations to cut Decius and all his rebellions Legions in Pieces; and in this manner he began his March, shewing such Anger and Haughtiness towards his Soldiers, as render'd him odious to the Army; so that esteeming Decius more worthy of the Empire, before they left Italy, in the City of Verona, they openly proclaim'd Decins; and fetting violently upon Philip, cut off his Head, or rather cleav'd it in funder, just by his upper Row of Teeth. This hapned between the 17th of June and the 19th of October, under the Consulfnips of Emilian and Aquilinus, he being now in the 46th Year of his Age, and having reign'd five Years and some few Months,

IV. Shortly after the Death of Philip, which was A. D. succeeded by that of his Son, Decius was without Contradiction, acknowledg'd and confirm'd Emperor, both by DECIthe Soldiers and Senate. He was by Birth of an ancient US, and noble Family of Pannonia, the only Emperor of that the 30th Roman Country, who having held many Offices and Dignities, ar- Emperor, riv'd at this high Station in the 58th Year of his Age. As Zesim. soon as his Election was confirm'd, he gave the Title of &c. Cafar to his four Sons, Decius, Hetruscus, Trajan, and Hostilian; which some have mention'd as a particular Mark of his Ambition. Then leaving Valerian, a wife and experienc'd Commander, for General of all his Forces, he return'd to the City of Rome; where he shew'd himself so brave and active in his Regulations, fo fagacious and politick in Administration, and became so universally acceptable by his modest and excellent Behaviour, that by the Sentence of the Senate he was voted not inferior to the Emperor Trajan, and like him had the Title of Optimus given to him. But notwithstanding all his Merits, and the Respect paid to him, his unheard of Cruelties towards the innocent Christians, has justly occasion'd him to be rank'd with Nero and Domitian, and according to Lastantius, to procure him the Title of The Execrable Decius:

The Seventh General Persecution.

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For this merciless Man, shortly after the Beginning of his Reign, rais'd the most dreadful Persecution that ever had been known in the Church, which is most commonly call'd The seventh General Persecution; tho' Lactantius names Decius as the third of the general Persecutors, leaving out Trajan, Antoninus, Severus, and Maximinus, as not Persecutors in so proper a Sense. Eusebius ascribes the main Cause of this Persecution, to this Emperor's Hatred to his Predecessor Philip, whom he accounts a Christian; to which Gregory Nyssen adds a more probable Account of the Matter, namely, the large and triumphant Prevalency of the Christian Faith, which had diffus'd it felf over all Parts, and enliven'd every Corner, not only Cities and Towns, but Country Villages; fo that the Temples were forfaken, and the Churches throng'd, the Pagan Altars overthrown, and their Sacrifices despis'd. This wonderful Increase of Christianity, and great Declension of Paganism, awaken'd the Malice of Decius; who was enrag'd to fee the Religion of the Empire trodden under Foot, and the Worship of the Gods in all Places neglected, opposed and undermined by a Novel and upftart Sect, which daily multiply'd into greater Numbers. This made him refolve with all possible Force to check this growing Party, and to use all Methods of Cruelty imaginable to exterminate the Name of Fesus Christ, and reduce the People to the Religion of their Ancestors: Thereupon he issu'd out Edicts to the Governors of Provinces, strictly commanding them to proceed against the Christians with the utmost Severity, and to spare no kinds of Torments, unless they return'd to the Obedience and Worship of the Gods. Tho' it is not to be doubted, but that the exceeding Growth of Christianity was the main Spring that fet on work the Malice of its Enemies; yet the excellent Cyprian, like a Man of great Piety and Modesty, finds out a Cause nearer home, ingenuously acknowledging that the Sins of the Christians had set open the Flood-Gates for the Divine Displeasure to break in upon them: For Pride and Self-Interest, Want of Charity, Divisions and Factions, began to reign amongst them; and the very Martyrs themselves, who should have been an Example to others, casting off the Order and Discipline of the Church, became swell'd with

with fo vain and immoderate a Tumour, that it was time God should fend them a Thorn in the Flesh to cure it.

As to the Violence and Severity of this Storm, no- Syprian. thing can be imagin'd more black and difinal; and this Greg. Ny. fucceeding a Calm of 38 Years continuance (excepting that little Interruption under Maximinus) it made it the more dangerous and insupportable. Rome, Carthage, Alexandria, Neocasarea, and all Parts of the Empire, felt the dreadful Effects of it; every Heathen being ambitious to promote the Imperial Edicts, and thinking it meritorious to bring a Christian to the Stake. The Christians were in all Places driven from their Habitations, spoil'd in their Estates, and tormented in their Bodies; Racks and Prisons, Axes and Halters, Fire and wild Beasts, scalding Pitch and melted Wax, sharp Stakes and burning Pincers, were but some of the Methods of their Treatment; and when the former were run over, new were daily invented and executed. Nor did they only vary, but repeat their Torments, and where one ended another began; they many times tortur'd them without Hopes of dying, adding this Cruelty to the rest, to stop them in their Journey to Heaven; and others were kept upon the Rack that they might die by Piece-meals, that their Pains might be lingering, and the Sense of them without Intermission. Accufations were infinite; some came in as Informers, others as Witnesses, some search'd all private Corners, others feiz'd upon them that fled, and some who expected their Neighbours Estates, took occasion to accuse them of Christianity. So that there was a general Confusion and Consternation, the Laws of Nature and Humanity were trodden under Foot; Friend betray'd his Friend. Brother his Brother, and Children their Parents, every Man being afraid of his nearest Relations. By this means the Woods and Mountains became full, and the Cities and Towns empty; yet no fooner were many Houses cleared of their proper Owners, but they were turn'd into common Goals, the publick Prisons not being sufficient to contain the Multitudes of Christians sent thither. Great Numbers that fled, met with new Miseries, being famish'd with Hunger and Thirst, starv'd with Cold, over-run with Diseases, surprized by Robbers, or worried by wild Beasts, and many taken by the wild Arabs and Saratens, who reduc'd them into a State of Slavery more miserable than Death it felf. And what was another terrible Calamity to the Church, many of the weaker Christians, unprepar'd

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par'd for so terrible a Conflict, apostatiz'd, or compounded with their Persecutors. Several of these were punish'd by the immediate Hand of Heaven; and several afterwards return'd to the Church, and were restor'd and recover'd. Tho' many revolted from the Faith, yet more maintain'd their Station with a firm and unshaken Courage; and mamy thousands held out 'till they had obtain'd the Crown of Martyrdom; Nicephorus affirming it to be easier to count the Sand of the Sea, than to reckon up the Martyrs in this Persecution. And what most mortify'd the Persecutors, was, that many who 'till now had been Enemies to Christianity, on a sudden came in, and publickly profess'd themselves Christians, and defy'd all the Powers of Satan; infomuch that the Judges were amaz'd and trembled, whilst the Condemned were chearful and couragious, and willing to undergo the feverest Conflicts.

A. D. 250. Decii

2. Cyprian. Enfeb.

This Persecution begun in Rome about the latter End of the Year 249; and in the Beginning of the following Year, January 20, Fabian Bishop of Rome, after he had held this Dignity 14 Years, receiv'd the Crown of Martyrdom. After his Death there was a Vacancy for 16 Months, and the Place was in a great measure supplied by the Clergy of the City. His Martyrdom was succeeded by that of Abdon, Sennas, Victoria, Anatolia, and many others in this City, as also by the Imprisonments of two eminent Confessors, Celerinus and Moyses. In the Beginning of the same Year the Persecution reach'd Carthage and Africa, where it rag'd after an unheard of manner, of which St. Cyprian gives us a fad and difmal Account. This great Man was publickly proscribed by the Name of Cacilius Cyprianus, Bishop of the Christians; and every Man commanded not to conceal his Goods; besides which the People frequently call'd out that he might be thrown to the Lions. So that being warned by a divine Admonition and Command from God, as he himself assures us, and lest his Presence should provoke his Enemies to fall more feverely upon his Flock, he thought good at prefent to withdraw himself from Carthage, continuing in a private and distant Retirement for above a Year. During his Recess, tho' absent in Body, yet he was present in Spirit, supplying the Want of his Presence by thirty excellent Letters, furnish'd with pious Councils, grave Admonitions, seasonable Reproofs, earnest Exhortations, and hearty Prayers to Heaven for the Welfare and Prosperity of the Church. His greatest Concern was for the Case

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of the Lapsed, whom Felicissimus and some few Presbyters, Opposers of Cyprian's Election, without the Knowledge and Consent of their Bishop, had rashly admitted to the Communion of the Church upon very easie Terms. Cyprian a strict Asserter of Eccletiastical Discipline, and the Rights of his Place, was highly offended, and not only by feveral Letters complained of it, but endeavour'd to reform it, not sparing the Martyrs themselves, who pre-suming upon their great Merits in the Cause of Religion, took upon them to give Libels of Peace to the Lapsed, whereby they were again taken into Communion, sooner than the Rules of the Church did allow. The Example of Cyprian's Retirement was follow'd by feveral eminent Men, particularly Gregory Thaumaturgus, who not only retreated from Neocafarea himself, but also advis'd his Church to decline the present Storm, and not to rely too much upon their own natural Strength. Dionysius Bishop of Alexandria, with much Difficulty, elcap'd into the wild Defarts of Lybia, with his four Fellow-Prisoners and Presbyters, Cains, Faustus, Peter and Paul. Among those that fled, we may mention the celebrated Paul of Thebais in Ægypt, a young Man of 21 Years of Age, who withdrew himself into the Egyptian Defarts, where finding a large and convenient Cavern in a Rock, which had formerly been a private Mint-house in the Time of Anthony and Cleopatra, he took up his Abode, leading for above 90 Years, 'till he was 113 Years old, a folitary and anchoretick Course of Life, and became the Father of Hermits, and all fuch as afterwards refign'd themfelves to Solitude, and a more strict mortify'd Life.

But most of those eminent Men who stood their Ground, Enfeb. became glorious Sufferers. Among whom were Nestor Ad. Ma. Bishop of Megyddo in Pamphilia; Pionius, the illustrious &c. Presbyter of Smyrna, who shew'd the most heroick Courage imaginable; Julian, Chronicon, Epimachus, Alexander, Ammon, Zeno, Ptolomy, Ammonaria, Mercuria, Isidore, and many others at Alexandria; Mappalicus, Baffus, Fortunio, Paulus, Donatus, Martialis, &c. in Carthage; befides those already mention'd in Rome, and an infinite Number of others. Also the renowned Babylas Bishop of Antioch, after he had worthily held that Dignity about 13 Years, dy'd either in Prison, or by the Sword, having first order'd his Chains to be bury'd in the same Grave with him, where St. Chrysoftom affures us, they remain'd in his Time, concerning which we are told a strange 10 31 STE

Story; but that is out of the Limits of our History. He was succeeded by a Person call'd Fabius, who continu'd in the See but a Year or two, and was the 13th Bishop of Antioch after the Apostles. Among all the Sufferers in this difinal Time, the renowned Origen (now 64 Years of Age) had not the least Share. Eusebius summing up his Sufferings, tells us that the Devil muster'd up all his Forces against him, and affaulted him with all his Arts and Engines, marking him out above all others of that Time, as the Object of his utmost Rage and Fury. He was cast into the Bottom of a loathsome and uncomfortable Dungeon, loaded with Irons, a Chain about his Neck, his Feet set in the Stocks, with his Legs stretch'd to the utmost for many Days together; he was threatned with Fire, and try'd with all the Torments that a merciless Enemy could inflict. Which meeting with a Person of his Age, and a Body broken with fuch infinite Cares and Labours, must needs be unexpressibly burthensome. And yet he bore all with a noble Patience, and was ready to submit to the last fatal Stroke; but the Judge, to give all possible Additions to his Misery, order'd his Torments to be fuch as should not take away his Life; so that before the Persecution ended, he escaped. The Storm of the Persecution was very dismal all this Year, and most of the next; yet in the latter End of this, there appear'd fome Dawnings of Light in Carthage and Africa, and many of the Confessors of those Parts were releas'd out of Priton.

This Persecution, rousing, as it were, the Vengeance of Heaven, was attended and succeeded by many Miseries and Calamities in the Roman Empire; particularly by great Wars and Devastations from the Goths, and other barbarous Northern Nations, and likewise by a dreadful Pestilence, which beginning in Athiopia in the Confines of Ægypt, from thence infected all the Provinces in the World, spreading for no less than ten Years after in an unheard of manner, and destroying incredible Numbers of People in every City in the Empire. To remedy the first of these Evils, the Emperor having nominated his Sons Decius and Etruscus Augusti, and Partners in the Empire, made all possible Preparations, and in the Spring went into Thrace and Masia, where the Goths had been most successful; leaving the Government of Rome in the Hands of the Senate. Shortly after his Departure, the Clergy of Rome, who had taken Care of that Church during fixteen

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A D. 251. Decii

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Months Vacancy, made choice of Cornelins for their Bishop, a worthy Roman, Son of Castinus, who continu'd in the See but one Year and a little above three Months, and was the 20th Bishop of Rome after the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. Notwithstanding the Worth of this Person, this Election accidentally occasion'd vast Mischiefs in the Church, which were rais'd and promoted by the Pride and Turbulence of two Presbyters, Novatian and Novatus, one of Rome, and the other of Carthage. Novatian had been formerly a Pagan Philosopher, who being dangerously ill, had been baptiz'd in his Bed, and afterwards was ordain'd Priest, tho' not without Opposition from Clergy and People, it being, as they faid, contrary to the Orders of the Church, that any should be ordain'd who had been baptiz'd after that Manner. Cornelius accufes him of denying his Sacerdotal Function in the Time of Persecution, and of other unjustifiable Practices. Being Master of much Wit, Knowledge and Eloquence, he might have been very ferviceable to the Church, if his Ambition to be Bishop, the main Occasion of the Apostacy of the first Heresiarchs, had not carry'd him to a Sepa-After the Death of Pope Fabian, he wrote a very elegant Letter to St. Cyprian, in the Name of the Clergy of Rome, and continu'd in the Communion of the Church during the Vacancy of that See. But as foon as Cornelius was chosen Bishop, push'd forwards by Envy and Ambition, he openly attack'd his Election, accus'd him of feveral Crimes, and publish'd a Libel against him. His principal Plea was, that Cornelius admitted those to Communion who had been guilty of Idolatry; and to make the best Advantage of this Acculation, he rigorously maintain'd, That we ought never to permit those Persons to partake of the Communion, who had once fallen into Idolatry. Upon this Pretence he separated from Cornelius, and from those who believ'd that the Church might receive them again upon Repentance. The greater Part of the Confessors who had suffer'd couragiously for the Faith, too much fwell'd with Vanity, and unable to endure, that others who had shewn so little Constancy and Resolution, should stand on the same Level with themselves, embrac'd Novatian's Party, together with some Presbyters. At the fame Time, Novatus before-mention'd, having imbroil'd the Church of Carthage; and finding himself in Danger of being excommunicated by Cyprian for his icandalous, irregular and unpeaceable Practices, repair'd to Rome, 04

join'd himself to Novatian, and brought with him from Carthage those of his own Faction. They both maintain'd the same rigid Principles, denying all Communion to the Lapsed, tho' never so penitent. And thus a dangerous Schisin began in the Church of Rome, which at that Time consisted of one Bishop, 44 Presbyters, 7 Deacons, 7 Sub-Deacons, 42 Acolyths or Clerks, 52 Porters and Exorcists, above 1500 Widows and Poor, and a very great

Multitude of People: and and and

In the mean Time the Perfecution being somewhat abated in Carthage, St. Cyprian return'd to his Post, where he vigorously fet himself to reform Disorders, and to compose the Differences that disturb'd the Church. For which purpose he conven'd a Synod of his neighbouring Bishops to confult about the Cause of the Lapsed; who having discussed the whole Matter, according to the Rules of the Holy Scripture, concluded upon this wife and moderate Expedient, that neither all Hopes of Peace and Communion should be deny'd them, lest Despair should throw them into a total Apostacy; nor yet the Censures of the Church be so far relaxed, as rathly to admit them to Communion: But that the Causes being examined, and Regard being had to the Will of the Delinquents, and Aggravations of particular Cases, their Time of Penance should be accordingly prolonged, and Clemency be obtain'd by Acts of more than ordinary Sorrow and Repentance. That the Lapfed being of feveral Sorts, should be treated according to the Nature of their Crimes; the Libellatici, who had only purchased Libels of Security and Remission from the Heathen Magistrate to excuse them from sacrificing in Time of Persecution, should be soon admitted to Reconciliation; but the Sacrificati be still kept under Penance, and not allow'd Reconciliation 'till they became dangerously fick, provided they began to do Penance before their Distemper. For as for such as staid 'till they were sick, before they defir'd to undergo Penance, it was thought expedient wholly to refuse them Absolution, because then, fays St. Cyprian, it is not so much Sorrow for their Sins, as the Fear of Death, that obliges them to defire it. As for those Ecclesiasticks who had fallen into Idolatry, it was ordain'd that they should for ever be excluded from the Clergy, that they should communicate no more with the Faithful, but as Lay-men, and that even some of them should be oblig'd to undergo the Severities of Penance. They likewise excommunicated Felicissims and those of his Party, who had disturb'd the Tranquillity -

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of the Church of Carthage, in St. Cyprian's Absence; and here Privatus an Heretick of the Colony of Lambefa, who had been condemn'd by 90 Bishops, presented himself; but feeing himself so far neglected, as not to be admitted to make his Defence, he embrac'd the Party of Felicissimus. The Council, after they had made these Regulations, fent a Synodical Letter to Cornelius, whom they acknowledg'd Bishop of Rome; who thereupon assembled a Synod of 60 Bishops, and above as many Presbyters and Deacons, who follow'd the Rules of the African Council in ordering of publick Penance for the Lapsed: Particularly Trophimus, a lapfed Bishop, with his Flock, was receiv'd in, after great Humility and severe Penance; but he himself was not allow'd to communicate, but only in a Lay Capacity. As for Novatian, Novatus, and all that obstinately adher'd to their inhuman and merciles Opinion, they were excommunicated; but it was ordain'd, that the Brethren who had fallen into that Calamity, should be more gently treated, and restor'd by reasonable Methods of Repentance.

The Church's Censure was so far from humbling Nova- Enfet. tian, that he immediately enter'd upon new and worse Gyrum. Projects; and being instigated by Novatus, he resolv'd to make himself Bishop of Rome. In order to effect this, he fent two of his own Cabal to three mean ignorant Bishops, who liv'd in a small Province of Italy, and prevail'd with them to come to Rome, under pretence of accommodating Affairs, and putting a Stop to some new Divisions. These Bishops arriving, he shut them up in a Chamber, and caus'd himself to be ordain'd Bishop of Rome by them, about ten a-clock at Night, and this after he had made them drunk, as Cornelius relates the Matter. This rais'd a great Disturbance in the Church of Rome; and the Heads of both Parties being desirous to obtain the Favour and Approbation of St. Cyprian, and of the other African Bishops, wrote Letters to them, and sent their Deputies to Africk. Novatian's Letters were very ill receiv'd; yet the African Bishops for a while suspended their Judgments, and ceas'd to fend Letters of Communion to either of the two Parties, 'till they were inform'd of the Matter by two of their own Brethren, call'd Caldonius and Fortunatus, whom they purposely dispatcht to Rome to learn the true State of the whole Affair. After they were fully inform'd by them, and two other African Bishops, who were present at the Ordination of Cornelius, they decided it in favour of Him, and fent him Letters of Communi-

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on, having first confirm'd the Judgment he had pass'd against Novatian in Italy. This occasion'd St. Cyprian to write to the Confessors of Rome his Treatife of the Unity of the Church, 'wherein he shew'd by several Reasons, That the Church of Jesus Christ was essentially One, and that there could not be more; that there was only one Episcopacy, a Part whereof every Pastor really pos-' fess'd; that such as were out of the Church could hope for no Salvation; and that Schifm and Heresie were the ' most enormous Crimes, which God had always punish'd with the greatest Severity. Therefore he exhorted all ' Christians what soever to return to it again, to promote U-' nion by their joint Endeavours, and to maintain no Correspondence with Schismaticks. The Judgment of the Church in Africk, and the eloquent Writings of St. Cyprian brought the Confessors of the Roman Church over to Cornelius: The Italian Bishops also adher'd to him; and one of the three who ordain'd Novatian, acknowledg'd his Fault, and did Penance for it. Novatian and Novatus finding themselves rejected, endeavour'd to raise Disturbances in Africk and other Parts; and to fecure their Interest, Novatian caus'd his Followers to take this Oath, I swear by the Body and Blood of Christ, that I will never defert you, nor return to Cornelius. They still persisted in teaching this Docrine, that the Church neither can, nor ought to admit any to the Communion, who had once apostatiz'd; and they likewise condemn'd second Marriages, as the Montanists before them had done. They charg'd the Orthodox with horrid Licentiousness in admitting scandalous Offenders, and by way of Distinction, they call'd themselves and their Party Cathari, the pure undefil'd Party, who kept themselves from all Society with the Lapfed, and fuch as communicated with them. And as this Severity was agreeable to the Humours of many, Novatian became the Head of a prevailing Herefie, which spread through many remote Parts of the World, and so extreamly disturb'd the Peace of the Church for a long time, that this Century is call'd by fome Saculum Novatianum.

Enfeb.

Syprian.

Lactant.

&c.

In the midst of these Disturbances in the Church, the Persecution still continu'd, tho' abated in some Places. And now Alexander Bishop of Jerusalem, having held that Dignity 39 Years, after several Araignments and various Sufferings, dy'd in Prison at Casarea, to the great Loss of the whole Church, particularly to Origen, who had ever

found him a true Friend and Patron. He was succeeded by Mazabanes, who continu'd in this See about nine Years, and was the 35th Bishop of Ferusalem, after the Apostle St. James. About the same time Moyses that eminent Priest and Confessor, with uncommon Courage and Constancy, fuffer'd Martyrdom within the Walls of Rome. And now God thought fit to give some Ease to his Church, by removing its severest Persecutor Decius, who warring with the Goths and barbarous Northern Nations, in a short Time was in a hopeful Way of destroying those Ravagers. For he had not only gain'd an entire Victory over them, with the Loss of 30000 of their Men, but had also block'd them up in fuch a manner as to have them all at his Mercy. But by the Treachery of his chief Commander Gallus, the Goths were put into fuch a Condition, as not only to escape, but also to attack him with all possible Advantage on their Side. So that being surrounded by the Enemy, a great Part of his Army was cut off. Perceiving his Defeat, and feeing his eldelt Son kill'd before his Face, he in Defpair clapt Spurs to his Horse, and rode furiously into a deep Lake or Bog, where he perish'd miserably. His Body had not so much as the Honours of a Funeral, but as belt befitted one who had fet himfelf against God, was expos'd as a Prey to the Bealts of the Earth, and to the Fowls of the Air. Thus dy'd Decius, a Prince sufficiently fam'd for his Actions, excepting those relating to the Christians, whose Blood was reveng'd not only upon him, his Son, and his whole Army, but also upon the whole Roman Empire, by means of the Inundations of the Goths and other barbarous Nations, who at that Time might have been easily supprest, if not ruin'd by natural Means, if Providence had thought it fit. His Death hapned in the latter End of November, in the Year when he and his Son were Confuls; being now in the 60th Year of his Age, and having reign'd a little above two Years.

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The Goths purfu'd their Victory, and made a mi- GALferable Slaughter of the Roman Army; and those who escap'd, fled to the Legions commanded by Gallus, who, as the 31st a Confederate with the Goths, was in Safety. This Per-Roman fon thew'd himself war indicated a confederate with the Goths, was in Safety. fon shew'd himself very industrious in strengthening and Emperor. encouraging his Army, promising great Success against the Zosim. Enemy, till by his popular Actions he effected his Defigns; Entrop. and procur'd the Soldiers to proclaim him Emperor. The Cyprian, Senate and People of Rome were extreamly concern'd,

both for the Death of Decins, and the Overthrow of their

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A. D. 252.

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Army; but understanding that Gallus was chosen Emperor, and that his Legions had fecured fuch Men as escap'd from the Battel, they confirm'd his Election. Gallus was now about 45 Years of Age, and descended of an honourable Family in Rome, which he much stain'd by his infamous Actions. For he not only fully'd it by his treasonable Practices before he was Emperor, but after his Advancement he made a Peace with the Goths, the most dishonourable that ever the Romans made fince the Foundation of their City; which was, That the Romans sould every Year pay a considerable Tribute to the Goths. And thus to gain the Title of Emperor, he was content to make himself and the Romans, who were accounted Lords of all Nations, tributary and subject to a rude and barbarous People. But the Successes of this Emperor prov'd according to the Merit of his Actions: For the Goths, and other Northern Nations, not fatisfy'd with their Advantagious Peace, broke it in a short time, and like a mighty Torrent, came down upon the Provinces of Thrace, Maha, Theffaly, Macedonia, and some Parts of Afia, committing all kinds of Devastations and Massacres. On the other Side, the Persians seeing the great Successes of the Goths, enter'd into Mesopotamia and Syria, with a mighty Power, under their great King Sapores; and then passing forwards, they subdu'd Armenia, and drove out Tiridates the King of that Country. But Gallus not much regarding these Troubles and Calamities abroad, consum'd his Time in the Pleasures of Rome, taking his Son Volusian, the' but a Child, for his Companion in the Empire, and causing Virtus Augustorum to be stampt upon their Coins, as tho' Valour, and not Treachery, had gain'd him the Empire.

Cyprian. Die. Ale.

During these Disturbances in the State, the Church was no less disturb'd by Novatian and his Party, who finding themselves rejected in Italy, to be reveng'd upon their great Opposer St. Cyprian, rais'd what Mischiefs they could in Africk, where they caus'd one Maximus, a Deputy of Novatian, to be chosen Bishop: On the other side Felicissimus of Carthage, an old Enemy to Cyprian, procur'd Privatus of Lambesa, formerly mention'd, to ordain a Person call'd Fortunatus, Bishop, in opposition to Cyprian, and afterwards came into Italy to get his Ordination ratify'd there by Cornelius, pretending that this Fortunatus had been ordain'd by five and twenty Bishops, and that Cyprian himfelf himself favour'd the Party of the Novatians. Cornelius at first rejected Felicissimus, and those of his Faction; but at length, either terrify'd by their Menaces, or shaken by their Discourses, he entertain'd some Suspicions to the Prejudice of St. Cyprian, and writto him after a very disobliging Manner; to which the other return'd a very warm Answer, exposing his Weakness, and acquainting him with the Malice of his Enemies. At the same Time the Faction of Novatian began to spread it self in the East, and to prevail in the City of Antioch; and Fabius the Bishop of the Place shew'd them too much Favour and Affection. This occasion'd a Synod of the Eastern Bishops about this Affair. For so Dionysius Alexandrinus in his Letter to Cornelius, tells him, that he had been fummon'd by Helenus Bishop of Tarsus, Firmilian of Cappadocia, and Theocliftus of Casarea, to meet in Council at Antioch, to suppress the Endeavours of some who thought there to establish the Novatian Schism. But shortly after the Party declin'd by means of the Death of Fabius, who held this Bishoprick not above two Years. He was succeeded by Demetrian, who continu'd in this Dignity about eight Years, and was the fourteenth Bishop of Antioch after the Apostles.

In the mean Time the excellent Cyprian call'd a Coun-Cyprian cil at Carthage of forty two Bishops, who meeting on the Engle. 15th Day of May, steered much the same Course as to the Lapsed; being sway'd to moderate Councils, because St. Cyprian had been frequently admonish'd by Divine Revelations of an approaching Persecution; and therefore they did not think it prudent and reasonable, that Men should be left naked and unarm'd in the Day of Battel, but be fortify'd with the Eucharist, and reconcil'd to the Church. In the Times of Peace and Prosperity they protracted the Time of Penance, and allow'd not the Sacrificati to be re-admitted, but at the Hour of Death; but now the Enemy was breaking in upon them, Christians were to be prepar'd for Suffering, and Encouragement given to those who by a fincere Repentance had shew'd themselves ready to contend earnestly for the Faith. This they did, not to patronize the Idle, but to excite the Diligent, the Church's Peace being granted, not in order to Ease, but to Conflict; and if any us'd their Indulgence to worse Purpofes, they did but delude themselves, and were remitted to the Divine Tribunal. The Resolution of this Council was immediately fignify'd to Cornelias, that he

might use the same Conduct in his own Church. And now there was particular Occasion; for the Emperor Gallus, to compleat the Miseries of his Reign, renew'd the Decian Persecution against the Christians, which had been much abated; refolving as it were to imitate his Predeceffor in nothing but his Crimes. He issu'd out no new Decrees, but only let loofe the Reins of the former; for which Reason it is properly enough call'd, a Continuai on of the Seventh Persecution. This was attended with many Miferies and Calamities in the Empire, which were one Pretence for it, as Wars, Ravages, Famines, and that dreadful Plague which began in Decius's Time, now rag'd more furiously than ever, particularly in St. Cyprian's Diocess of Carthage. There vast Multitudes were swept away every Day, and the Streets were fill'd with the Carcasses of the Dead, which seem'd to implore the Assistance of the Living. In this calamitous Time of Persecution and Pestilence, St. Cyprian call'd the Christians together, and in Imitation of the Divine Benignity, exhorted them to Acts of Mercy and Charity, and that to their greatest Enemies and Persecutors; and by his own Munificence and Perswasions, great Affistance was given to all forts of People. And that he might not be wanting to any, he at this time penn'd his excellent Discourse concerning Mortality, ' wherein he eloquently taught the Christians to triumph over the Fears of Death, and not to decline, but rather defire it, fince it deliver'd them from all the 'Miseries of this Life, and united them to Jesus Christ for ever; that therefore they had very little Reason to grieve for their Friends and Relations, fince they were gone to the Enjoyment of the most imaginable Felicity. This horrible Pestilence, as the other Calamities of the Empire had been before, was now by the Pagans charg'd upon the Christian Religion, as the Cause for which the Gods were implacably angry with the World. To vindicate it from this vulgar and popular Objection, Cyprian address'd himself in a particular Treatise to Demetrian the Proconful 'wherein he prov'd, that these Evils that came ' upon the World could never be laid at the Door of Christianity, affigning other Reasons of them, and a-' mongst the rest, their wild and brutish Rage against the " Christians, which had provok'd the Deity to bring these Calamities upon them, as a just Punishment of their ' Folly and Madness, in setting themselves against a Religion so innocent and dear to Heaven. About the

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fame time also he wrote to Fortunatianus a particular

Treatise call'd The Exhortation to Martyrdom.

The Persecution still continu'd in several Places, and Ench. particularly in Rome, where Cornelius the Bishop felt the Cyprian. Fury of it. For having made an open and generous Confession of his Faith, for which St. Cyprian applauds him. he was banish'd to Civita-Vecchia, not far from Rome. But that not fatisfying the Malice of his Enemies, he was after that taken up, cruelly scourg'd, and then beheaded upon the 14th Day of September, having continu'd in the See one Year, three Months, and ten Days: He left some few Writings behind him, and was fucceeded by Lucius, a Roman, Son to Porphyrius, who for his vigorous afferting the Truth of Christianity, was shortly after his Election banish'd with several others. But in the Beginning of the following Year 253, he return'd from his Exile with A. D. his Companions, for which he was congratulated by St. Cyprian; and not long after, in the Month of March, he Galli 2. obtain'd a glorious Martyrdom as well as his Predecessor, having held this Dignity but five Months and ten Days, according to Bishop Pearson. He was succeeded by Stephen I. a Roman, the Son of Julius, a Man of a warm and violent Temper, who continu'd in this See somewhat above four Years, and was the twenty second Bishop of Rome after the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. And now the Persecution drew to an End, but the Miseries of the Empire were as great as ever, and all the Reign of this wicked Emperor was unfortunate and deplorable; as well Zofim. for the Loss of several Provinces to foreign Enemies, as &c. other Calamities. He had only one confiderable Victory in Masia, gain'd by his General Æmilian over the Goths; of whom many Thousands were flain, and the Pursuit follow'd for feveral Days. But this Victory was fo far from being an Advantage to Gallus, that it soon after occasion'd his total Ruin; for Æmilian by this became so celebrated, and Gallus so despicable, that the Soldiers, who admir'd the Presents and Promises of Amilian, and who ever affected Novelties, proclaim'd him Emperor. The News of this foon rouz'd Gallus from his foft Pleafures in Rome, who thereupon with all possible Expedition prepar'd himself to oppose this dangerous Rival; and so leaving the City, with his Son and a powerful Army, he march'd towards Masia. Here he was met by Amilian, who boldly came to a Battel with him, and at length overthrew him, and flew both him and his Son Volulian:

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Volusian; the Soldiers all joining with the Conqueror. This hapned at Terni in the Month of May, under the Consulships of Volusian and Maximus, A. D. 253. Gallus being 47 Years of Age, and having reign'd one Year and six Months. His Death gave an entire Peace to the Church of God, after it had endur'd the most terrible Storm and Consict, that ever had been known before; and which had continu'd with some little Intermissions and Abatements, near three Years and a half.

CHAP. VI.

From the End of the Seventh General Perfecution of the Church, to the beginning of the Dioclesian Era, usually called, The Era of the Martyrs.

Containing the Space of about 31 Years.

A. D. 253. VALE-RIAN, the 32d Roman Emperor.

Pallie. Eufch. I. T TPON the Overthrow of Gallus, Amilian began to look upon himself as real Emperor of Rome; and accordingly wrote to the Senate of his Success and Election, adding many Complaints against the Milmanagement of Gallus, and as many Promiles of his own Performances. But the Senate had no Regard to these Promises; and the Army of the Alps likewise oppos'd him, chusing their own Commander Valerian for Emperor, whom the Senate favour'd. Upon Notice of which, Æmilian's Soldiers, mov'd with the great Reputation of Valerian, and the Favour of the Citizens, to avoid civil Wars, rose up against Amilian, and slew him, after a short Reign, or rather Usurpation of about three Months. Upon this, Valerian was not only acknowledg'd Emperor by the Army, but also by the Senate and People, with extraordinary Applauses, and being setled in the Government, he gave to his eldest Son Gallienus the Title of Augustus, and made him his Equal in the Empire. Valeriand was now about 70 Years of Age, most of which Time he had spent in great Fame and Reputation, both under good and bad Emperors, by reason of his Valour and other Accomplishments; and had attain'd to many Offices and Dignities; particularly under Decius he was made Cenfor

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Cenfor of Rome, an Office dif-us'd fince the Reign of Claudius, into which he was chosen by the Senate, who all cry'd out, That the Life of Valerian was a continual Censorship; and that he ought to judge of the Crimes of others, who had none of his own. He was of an ancient Family, and in the whole Course of his Life had been prosperous in his Enterprises; so that all had great Hopes that this Man's Wisdom and Experience would disperse the Calamities of these unhappy Times. And accordingly he set about many Regulations, and made choice of wise and worthy Governors, and of valiant and experienc'd Commanders, whom he selected from the chief of the Nobility, by whom he was very fuccessful in several Actions against the Northern Nations. Among the rest of his laudable Actions, he shew'd himself a particular Patron to the Christians, whom he treated with all Offices of Kindness and Humanity, kindly entertaining them even in his own Family; fo that his Court seem'd to be a Church for Pie-

ty, and a Sanctuary for Refuge to all good Men.

In the Beginning of this Emperor's Reign, or the End Englis of the last, the great Origen peaceably ended his Days at &c. Tyre, having liv'd near 69 Years, and most of them in the most imaginable Fatigue and Industry; leaving a Name that was the Envy of his own, and the Wonder of fucceeding Ages. If we consider this Man in the Correspondence he had with three or four Emperors, his Behaviour under three Perfecutions, the Censures he sustain'd the Heresies he confounded, the Numbers of Pagans he converted, the renown'd Scholars he taught, and the fix thousand Volumes he is said to have written, we can't but stand amaz'd at his wonderful Strength and Abilities. Tho' his Parts and Learning have been admir'd by all Men; yet his Errors were too many and dangerous to be excus'd; tho' they generally proceeded more from a curious Philosophical Head, than from a stubborn unsound Heart: He held and taught the main Principles of the Christian Religion with great Firmness; but being a vast Proficient in Philosophy, and too much possest with the Notions of Plato's School, he grew very folicitous to accommodate the divine Truths to his belov'd Opinions. And from three of them all his Errors feem to have proceeded; as first, that all intelligent Beings ever did, and ever shall exist: Secondly, That they have always been free to do Good and Evil; and Thirdly, that they have been precipitated in lower Places, and confin'd to Bodies for a Punishment of VOL. II.

their Sins. Notwithstanding his Errors, no Man had greater Pens employ'd in his Vindication than himself; and never were more famous Contests than about his Writings, which are believ'd to have been much corrupted, several Hereticks being ambitious to make so great a Man speak their Sense. Particularly, there arose a certain Sect which call'd themselves Origenists, maintaining some of his Principles, as that the Sun, Moon, and Stars, had all Souls, that the Torments of the Devils and Damned should have an End, &c. To which they added several other Errors, and some of them renew'd the Abominations of the Gnosticks, and were therefore still'd the Dirty and Impure. These Hereticks insected the Church to the 4th, 5th, and 6th Centuries; and were one Occasion of the Condemnation of all Origen's Works.

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Cyprian,

The Peace which the Church enjoy'd under this Emperor, gave Opportunity to the Bishops and Governors to make several Regulations; and particularly St. Cyprian call'd a Council in Carthage of 66 Bishops upon a double The first was concerning a certain Presbyter nam'd Victor, whom Therapius his own Bishop had too foon receiv'd into Favour, contrary to the Decision of the last Council; and the second was concerning the Time of baptizing Infants, started especially by Fidus an African Bishop, who afferted that Baptism was not to be administred before the eighth Day, as Circumcision was under the Jewish Law. As to the first, the Bishops were surprized to find Therapius slight the Authority of a Decree so lately enacted, but nevertheless, after mature Deliberation, they were of opinion that the Reconciliation Victor had receiv'd from his own Bishop, ought not to be revers'd; and so they permitted him to enjoy Lay-Communion, contenting themselves with admonishing their Colleague to be more vigilant for the future. As to the Baptism of Infants, it was determin'd, that it was not necessary to be deferr'd till the eighth Day, nor was the Mercy of God to be deny'd to any as foon as born into the World; that it was their universal Sentence 'That none ought to be prohibited Baptism and the Grace of God; which, as it was to be allow'd to all, so much more to Infants and e new-born Children. About this Time also, St. Cyprian writ against Fortunatianus, who had been Bishop of Assuri, and directed his Letter to Epictetus, who was elected in his Place, and to the People of that City. This Fortunatianus had the Unhappiness to fall into Idolatry, and up-

on that Account was depriv'd of his Bishoprick; after which he earnestly labour'd to re-possess himself of it, and to perform his Episcopal Functions as formerly. In this Letter St. Cyprian 'condemn'd these Proceedings, and demonstrated the Necessity of Sanctity to make Mens Sacrifices acceptable, advising the People not to fuffer him to exercise his Office, but to separate from

him in case he persisted in his Design.

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In the following Year, the Bishops of Spain had recourse A. D. to St. Cyprian, about an Affair of the same Nature, for Basilides and Martial, Bishops of Leon and Astorga, hav- Valer. ing been publickly convicted of Idolatry, and other Crimes, were depriv'd, and Felix and Sabinus elected in their Pla-Basilides owning his Crime, had voluntarily quitted Coprian, his Bishoprick, and was plac'd in the Rank of Penitents, &c. thinking himself happy if he might be admitted to Lay-Communion. Nevertheless, these two, afterwards push'd on by Envy and Ambition, us'd their utmost Endeavours to regain their Sees; and for that End repair'd to Rome, not to demand their Re-establishment from Pope Stephen, but only to obtain favourable Letters from him. Stephen being surpriz'd into a Compliance, granted them their Request; so that upon their return to Spain, they became more insolent than ever, and thought to re-possess themfelves by main Force. Whereupon the Clergy and People of Spain by Letters address'd themselves to St. Cyprian, and also deputed the new Bishops, Felix and Sabinus, to know how to proceed in this Exigency. The holy Prelate judging it a Matter of no small Importance, call'd a Council of 36 Bishops, which was his fourth in Carthage; and after a diligent Examination of all Circumstances, the Bishops came to this Resolution, That the Deprivation of Basilides and Martial, as well as the Ordination of Felix and Sabinus in their Places, ought to stand good: To which Purpose they wrote a Synodical Letter to the Clergy and People of those Diocesses, wherein they declar'd, 'That fince the People had Power to elect good Bishops, and to reject the Bad, they wou'd be answerable to God if they any longer communicated with them; 'That the Ordination of Felix and Sabinus was lawful, ' fince it was done by the neighbouring Bishops, by the 'Consent of the People, that it ought not to be revers'd, 'tho' Basilides had impos'd upon the Credulity of Stephen, ' which Conduct, instead of effacing their Crimes, aggravated their Guilt. Shortly after this, St. Cyprian was confulted

612 Cent. III. Ecclesiastical History. Book III.

fulted by the Gallican Bishops, concerning Marcian Bishop of Arles, who being infected with the Novatian Herefie, brought over feveral Persons to his Party, and arrogantly infulted over his Brethren. Faustinus Bishop of Lyons, and several other Bishops, wrote both to Pope Stephen and St. Cyprian, defiring their Concurrence in excommunicating Marcian. But Stephen neglecting the Affair, Cyprian wrote to him, 'defiring him to satisfie the Requests of the Gallican Bishops, and dispatch his Letters to Arles, declaring Marcian excommunicated; remonstrating, That since that Bishop had joyn'd himself to Novatian, there was no Occasion for a new Judgment against him; that all Bishops were oblig'd to ad-' mit Penitents into the Church, so that the whole Body of Bishops being united by a mutual Charity, whenever "Christ's Flock is attack'd by Heresies or Schisms, they ' may be able to re-unite the Sheep, like good Shepherds who truly love their Flock. About the fame time, being highly censur'd by an African Bishop call'd Papienus, who believ'd the Calumnies of Felicissimus, he wrote a solemn Letter to him, justly condemning his rash Believing any ill Reports of his Brother, concluding with these remarkable Words, 'You have my Letter, and I have yours; they will be both read in the Day of Judgment, before ' the Tribunal of Jesus Christ.

A. D. 255. Valer.

3. Cyprian,

But now St. Cyprian was concern'd about a greater Affair, which was examin'd in a Council of 32 Bishops, which he call'd the following Year; and this was concerning the famous Contest about re-baptizing those who had been baptiz'd by Hereticks. This, by the Occasion of the Montanists and Novatians, had been formerly canvast in the Eastern Parts, from whence it flew over to Numidia, and by Januarius and the Bishops of that Province, it was brought before St. Cyprian, and this Council of Carthage. In this it was determin'd, 'That no Baptism could be valid out of the Church; That it was absolutely necessary to re-baptise those who had receiv'd the Baptism of Hereticks; and that this was no novel Sentence, but had been so adjudg'd by the African Bishops their Predecessors, and the Thing constantly practis'd and observ'd by them. Quintus a Bishop, soon after desiring St. Cyprian's Opinion of this Matter, he return'd him the fame Answer, ' tho' he modestly acknowledg'd that some of his Brethren were of a different Opinion, and fent him the Decision of the Synod. But that this Controverlie

Valer.

versie might be more fully examin'd, this excellent Ma in the next Year affembled a Council of 71 Bishops, as well of the Province of Africk, as Numidia, who confirm'd all that had been determin'd by the preceding Synod, concerning the Baptism of Hereticks, and decreed, That all Presbyters and Deacons who were ordain'd amongst them; and also such of the Clergy, who had

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been some time of their Party, upon their Return to the Church, shou'd only be receiv'd in the Quality of La-' icks. And the better to maintain that Honour and Friendthip which Bishops ow'd to each other, they acquainted Pope Stephen with their Constitutions by a Synodical

Letter, towards the Conclusion of which it represented, That fince their Ordinances were conformable to Truth and the Christian Religion, they hop'd he wou'd make

no Difficulty to approve them: That they were fensible that all Bishops could not readily change their Opinion,

yet tho' they retain'd their own Customs, they might fill preserve the Laws of Charity; Therefore they did

not magisterially impose their Opinions upon others, fince every Bishop had full Authority within the Juris-

diction of his own Church, for which he was accounta-

ble to God alone. Pope Stephen was so far from submitting to the Rea- Cyprian, fons of the Africans in this Matter, whether because he Engle. imagin'd they had a Design against the Roman Church, or because he thought the Question of too great Consequence for them to determine, that he was enrag'd again@ St. Cyprian and his Colleagues, and rudely treated their Deputies: Nay, he prohibited all the Christians of his Church to receive or lodge them, not only depriving them of Ecclefiastical Communion, but also refusing them the common Civilities of Hospitality. The Letter he writ back, was fill'd with Affronts and Invectives, and his Decision was comprized in these Terms; 'If any Perfon comes to you of any Herefie whatfoever, let not the least Alteration be made in what has been regulated by Tradition, but only lay Hands upon him, and so receive him. This being brought to Africk, St. Cyprian mov'd with the Proceedings of Stephen, sent his Letter, with a Refutation of it, not only to Pompey of Africk, but also to Firmilian, and the other Bishops of Cappadocia, who were all of the same Opinion with Cyprian, touching the Baptism of Hereticks. Firmilian particularly writ a long Epistle, wherein he amply and sharply refuted

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' the Opinion and Letter of Stephen, and establish'd the ' Discipline which Cyprian had defended; alledging, that ' it had been observ'd in his Country by immemorial Cu-' from, and confirm'd in two numerous Synods held at Iconium and Synnada. St. Cyprian also wrote a Letter to Bishop Jubianus about this Matter, and also another to Magnus, wherein he answer'd two important Questions, and declar'd, ' That Baptisim by the Novatians in particular, ought to be look'd upon as invalid; and that the Baptism of Clinicks, that is, of sick Persons on their Beds, was valid; and that the Sacrament was equally efficacious, whether the Person was plung'd into the Water, or had it sprinkled upon him. But, to put the grand Controversie beyond all Dispute, he summon'd a more general Council of 87 Bishops, which was the 7th and last, and the third upon this particular Occasion; and this assembled in the Month of September 256. In this Council the Letters of Jubianus to St. Cyprian, and his Answer to that Bishop, were first read. After which St. Cyprian propos'd to all the Bishops present, to deliver their Opinions freely, but yet not fo, as to condemn and excom-' municate those of a different Judgment; For, added he, ' none of us ought to make himself a Bishop of Bishops, or pretend to awe his Brethren by a tyrannical Fear, because every Bishop is at liberty to do as he pleases, and ' can no more by judg'd by another, than he can judge others himself; but all ought to wait for the Judgment of Jesus Christ, who alone can set us over the Church, and judge our Actions. After this Proposition, the Bifhops gave their Opinions, and concluded all in favour of St. Cyprian.

Cyprian. Enfeb. Not only Firmilian of Cappadocia, but also Dionysius of Alexandria, and many others in the East, stood firm to St. Cyprian, and maintain'd, that all Persons baptiz'd by Hereticks ought to be re-baptiz'd. Dionysius however carry'd himself with great Temper and Moderation, and in his Epistles 'distinguish'd between Apostates, who had receiv'd their Baptism in the Catholick Church, and Pure Hereticks; That the former upon their Return were to be admitted by the Imposition of Hands, which Practice he had learnt from his Predecessor Heraclas; but the latter, who had no Baptism but what was conferr'd by Heretical Persons, were to be enter'd into the Church by Catholick Baptism. Besides, he engag'd in this Dispute more like a Mediator than a Party, writing to Pope Stephen

Stephen to use Moderation in this Case, as he did also to his Successor, and most other Bishops of that Time. But neither Numbers nor Arguments wou'd satisfie Stephen; and indeed the Controversie arose to that Height between him and St. Cyprian, that he gave the other very rude and unchristian Language, stiling him false Christ, false Apoftle, deceitful Worker, and fuch like; while the other treated him with great Sharpness and Severity, charging him with Pride and Impertinency, Self-Contradiction, Ignorance, and Obstinacy, and other Weaknesses. Firmlian also charg'd Stephen with sacrificing the Peace of the Church to a petulent Humour, where Inhumanity, Audaciousness, Insolence and Impiety, are some of the Characters bestow'd upon him: A great Instance how far Passion and Prejudice may transport wife and good Men beyond the Merits of the Cause, and the Bounds of Charity. we have given an account of this great Controverfie, which was never nicely determin'd till the Council of Arles in the fourth Century. All that we shall add concerning it, is, that St. Cyprian and his Party expresly difown'd Anabaptism, or Rebaptization, still asserting that there was but one Baptism; only they look'd upon the Baptism of all Hereticks as ipso facto null and void, and therefore said, that the Parties so baptiz'd, ought to receive what (lawfully) they had not before.

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The Eighth General Persecution.

The Christians had now enjoy'd a profound Peace for about four Years from Valerian, who had been kind to them beyond any of the preceding Emperors; fo that they wanted no Assurance of a happy and prosperous Time. But in the 4th Year of his Reign, this Emperor gave way to the Suggestions and Delusions of an Arch-Magician of Ægypt, call'd Macrianus, who preyail'd upon him to fall from his former Kindness, and to persecute the Christians; alledging that these Men by their wicked and execrable Charms, hinder'd all the Prosperity of the Emperor, colouring his Pretence from their special Power over Demons, whose mischievous Arts they diffipated, and whom they ordinarily banished with the speaking of a Word. Upon a Pretence of this dangerous Power, Macrianus advis'd the Emperor to perform many impious Rites of Initiation, abominable Sacrifices and Enchantments, to cut the Throats of miserable Infants, to sacrifice the Children of unhappy

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Parents, to rip open the Bowels of new-born Babes, and to tear in Pieces, and cut in funder God's own Workmanship, as if by these Acts he should purchase for himfelf a lasting Felicity. Whereupon Edicts were in all Places publish'd against the Christians, the great Enemies to Magick, and they were without the least Protection, expos'd to the common Rage. This is commonly call'd The Eighth General Persecution of the Church, beginning in the Month of April, and continuing three Years and a half, or 42 Months: For fo Dionys. Alex. intimates when he makes Valerian to be the Beast in the Revelation, to whom was given a Mouth speaking great Things and Blasphemies, and Power was given to him to continue forty and two Months, Apoc. 13. 5. The same Person also tells us, that it is in vain to make a particular Enumeration of all the Christians that suffer'd in this Persecution; only it is observable, that both Men and Women, young and old, Soldiers and Rusticks, Persons of all Ranks and Ages, were some beaten and scourg'd, others beheaded, and others by overcoming the Violence of flaming Furnaces, receiv'd the Crown of Martyrdom.

Cyprian. Act. Cyp.

The Persecution began at Rome, where we have the Names of several Martyrs, as Rufinus, Secundus, Eusebius a Presbyter, and Marcellus a Deacon, with several others. But the chief of these Martyrs was Stephen himself, who fuffer'd on the second Day of August, after he had held the See of Rome a little above four Years. After a Vacancy of 22 Days, he was succeeded by Xystus or Sixtus II. an Athenian Philosopher, who held this Dignity almost one Year, and was the 23d Bishop of Rome after the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. The Persecution extended to all Parts of the Empire, and beginning in Africk, Aspasius Paternus the Proconsul sent for St. Cyprian to appear before him, informing him, That he had rereiv'd Commands from the Emperors, that all who were of Foreign Religion, should worship the Gods according to the Roman Rites, and demanded his Answer. Cyprian readily reply'd, That he was a Christian and a Bishop, who acknowledged none but the true God, the Creator of Heaven, Earth, and all Things; whom all Christians served, praying Day and Night for themselves and all Men, and for the Prosperity of the Emperors. The Proconful demanding of him whether that was his final Resolution, he reply'd, That Resolution which is founded in God, cannot be alter'd. Then he told him That he was to fearch out the Presbyters

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Presbyters as well as Bilhops, and that he was commanded to prohibit all private Assemblies, and proceed with capital Punishments' against the Frequenters of them. The holy Man gave him an unconcern'd Answer, so that the Proconful finding it was in vain to treat with him, commanded him to be banish'd to Caruba, a little City standing in a Peninsula within the Lybian Sea, not far from Pentapolis; a pleasant Place, where he met with kind Usage, was frequently visited by the Brethren, and furnish'd with all Conveniencies. In this Retirement God was pleas'd to favour him with feveral heavenly Visions, by one of which, in the first Day of his Arrival, he was particularly forewarn'd of the Manner of his approaching Martyrdom. At the same time the Præsect of Numidia, after having put several Christians to Death, and scourg'd others, condemn'd many to the Mines, and among the rest several Bishops and Presbyters of his Province. St. Cyprian, that he might improve all Opportunities, from the Place of his Exile fent these Martyrs an excellent Epistle, 'wherein with wonderful Eloquence he heighten'd the Glory of their Confession, and encourag'd them to suffer with Constancy: He fent this to three different Places, where these holy Confessors were dispers'd, and remitted some Mony to them to supply their present Extremities. Their Answers were written from three several Places, in which, in an unaffected Stile, 'they return'd him their Thanks for his great Kindness and Charity, and assur'd him, that his Letter had rais'd their drooping Spirits, heal'd their Wounds, and render'd their Pressures more light and fupportable to them.

As Africk felt the difinal Effects of this Persecution, so Englandid Egypt no less: And at the first Arrival of the Orders to Alexandria, Bishop Dionysius, with some of his Clergy, addrest himself to Emilian the Governor, who at first did not directly forbid him to hold his Assemblies, but endeavour'd to perswade him from it, presuming others would soon follow his Example. Dionysius return'd an Apostolical Answer, That we must obey God rather than Men, solemnly assuring him, That he would worship only the true God, from which Resolution he would never recede. The Governor told him, That he had acquainted them with the great Clemency of the Emperors, if they would act agreeably to Nature, and adore the Gods who were Protectors of the Empire, which he hop'd they would be more grateful than to results. To whom the Bishop reply'd, That though the Ro-

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mans worshipped other Gods, they only adored the Creator of the World, who gave the Government to the Emperors, and to whom they daily pray'd for the Permanency and Stability of the Empire. Upon this the Governor by way of Infinuation, urg'd him to worship the Romans Gods together with their own; but finding all ineffectual, he declar'd them ignorant and ungrateful, and order'd Dionysius to be banish'd to Cephro in the Defarts of Lybia, and likewise prohibited all the Assemblies of the Christians, threatning the severest Punishments to the Aggressors. The Sentence was immediately put in Execution, and Dionysius, tho' fick, was not allow'd one Day's Respite, but was hurried into the most uncomfortable Part of Lybia; but great Numbers of Christians soon follow'd him, partly from Alexandria, and partly from other Parts of Egypt. At his first Arrival he was treated with Rudeness, and a Shower of Stones, but in a short time he not only civiliz'd their Manners, but also reclaim'd them from Idolatry, and brought them to Christianity. And as he met with Success, so he shifted his Quarters, preaching about in those disconsolate Regions, and turning the Defart into a Church. Nor could all the Severity of Æmilian prevent the Christians Assemblies at Alexandria, tho' he proceeded with the utmost Hatred against such as were brought before him, killing many with all the Arts of Cruelty, keeping others for the Rack and Torment, loading them with Chains, and thrusting them into loathfome Dungeons, forbidding the Prefence of their nearest Friends. Yet even in the Height of these Afflictions God supported their Spirits, and animated others to venture in, and to administer Comfort and Necessaries to them, not fearing, tho' with the Peril of their Heads, to interr the Bodies of the Martyrs. From Cephro Dionyfius wrote to Pope Sixtus, concerning the Re-baptization of Hereticks, in which he made a remarkable Exception in one particular Instance, which was of a Man of his Congregation, who had formerly receiv'd his Baptism from Hereticks, and now desired to obtain Catholick Baptism; but he durst not admit him, because he had been many Years in the Class of the Faithful, and a conflant Receiver of the Eucharift, judging that his long Communion with the Church might be equivalent to Baptifm.

About this Time one Sabellius a Lybian, born at Ptolemais a City of Pentapolis, started some unorthodox Notions and Opinions about the Doctrine of the holy Trinity, teaching

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teaching that there was no Distinction between the three Persons, and afferting the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be but one Subsistence, one Person under three several Names, who in the Time of the Old Testament gave the Law under the Notion of the Father, in the New Testament was made Man in the Capacity of the Son, and afterwards descended upon the Apostles in the Quality of the Holy Ghost. Epiphanius tells us that Sabellius had fuck'd in this Error from some Apochryphal Books, and more especially from that call'd The Gospel of the Ægyptians, where our Saviour is introduced teaching his Apottles, that the Father and the Son are but one and the fame Person. Tho' those who then held this Opinion, were call'd Sabellians, yet the Heresie it self was more ancient than Sabellius. For we find that it was the Opinion of Praxeas and the Patropassians, and after them, of Noetus of Smyrna, from whom they were call'd Noetians; and lastly, of this Sabellius, who by his Care and Industry gave them that held it the Name of Sabellians, which Name ever after conti-

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And now the Persecution began to give a fatal Turn to all the Prosperity of Valerian; for Heaven being highly provok'd with the barbarous Treatment of its faithful Servants, fent its Scourges from the Northern Countries, who came down in a more formidable manner than ever; and at the same time the mighty Sapores King of Persia, with a Pollie. furious Progress over-run and ravag'd Syria, Cilicia, Cap- Cyprian. padocia, and the Eastern Parts of the Empire. This oblig'd Ambrose. the Emperor to make all possible Preparations, and to march with a powerful Army to Byzantium, to put a Stop to his Enemy's Power. But these Miseries were so far from mollifying his Heart, as to the Christians, that he fent a Rescript to the Senate more severe than ever, wherein he order'd that Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons should be put to Death without Delay; That Senators and Perfons of Quality should lose their Honours, and Preferments, and forfeit their Estates; and if they still continu'd Christians, lose their Heads; That Ladies of the highest Rank should not only have their Estates confiscated, but also be banish'd; and that all of the Emperor's Houshold should be immediately sent to Prison. Which gave Occation to the Governors to carry on the Persecution with more Violence than ever; among whom Macrianus was particularly diligent in Rome. In Execution of these Orders, Pope Sixtus was brought out and beheaded with

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Cyprian.

Quartus, on the 6th Day of August, after he had been Bishop of Rome 11 Months and 12 Days. As he was led to Execution, Laurence his Archdeacon and Treasurer follow'd after him, and with loud Cries desir'd, That he might partake of the Honour of Martyrdom with him, and that his Blood might be mingled with that of his Bishop. Sixtus told him, That he was referved for a more noble Combat, but that he should quickly follow him, and within three Days be where he was. The Governor knowing Laurence to be the Church's Treasurer, seiz'd upon him, and charg'd him to discover where the Treasures were. The holy Man defir'd three Days time to gather them together, and present them to him; at the End of which he presented a great Number of poor helpless People to the Governor, and let him understand, That they were the true Treasures of the Church. The Governor incens'd at this Disappointmeht, immediately order'd him to be torn with Scourges, to be whipt with Iron Rods and Plumbeta, and then to be fet on the wooden Horse, and to have all his Limbs dislocated; and last of all ordered a kind of Grid-Iron, with a flow Fire under it, to be made ready; upon which the Tyrant caus'd him to be laid down and roafted. All which Torments St. Laurence endured with admirable Constancy and Unconcernedness; and after a considerable Time lying upon that Bed, he victoriously call'd out to the Governor, I am roasted enough on this Side; turn me on the other, and then eat me. Then praying for the Conversion of Rome, he chearfully yielded up his Spirit to God. The Persecution was now so hot, that after the Death of Sixtus, there was a Vacancy in the Church of Rome for almost a Year, the Care of the Christians being then left to the Presbyters.

Nor were Carthage and Africk free from the Severity of this Persecution, where great Numbers suffer'd; particularly three hundred Martyrs at Utica, commonly call'd the Martyrs de Massa Candida, who rather than do Sacrisice, chearfully leapt into a mighty Pit of burning Lime kindled for that purpose, and were immediately suffocated in the Smoke and Flames. The daily News of the Christians Sufferings gave St. Cyprian just Reason to expect and provide for his own Fate, which he waited and long'd for every Hour. Tho' his chiefest Friends desired him to withdraw; yet the Desire and Prospect of an immortal Crown had set him above the World, and made him deas to all their kind Entreaties. But when News was brought

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that the Officers design'd to carry him to Utica, to suffer there, he retired, being unwilling to suffer in any Place but Carthage, in the Presence of the People where he had fo long and successfully preached the Gospel, the Truth of which he was defirous to feal with his Blood; 'it being very agreeable that a Bishop should suffer for his Lord in that Place where he had govern'd his Church, and by that emment Confession edifie and encourage the Flock committed to his Charge, as he writes in his last Epistle to his People. 'As for themselves, he advised them to Peace and Unity, not to create Trouble to one another, onor to offer themselves to their Persecutors; but if any were apprehended, couragiously to confess, as God should enable them to declare themselves. Taking up his Refidence in Carthage, Officers were immediately tent to apprehend him, who putting him in a Chariot carry'd him to the new Proconful Galerius Maximus, who commanded him to be kept a Day longer at an Officer's House, while the People alarm'd with the News of his Return and Apprehension, slock'd to the Doors, and watch'd there Being brought before the Proconful the next all Night. Day, Maximus looking upon him, faid, Art thou Thrascius Cyprian, a Bishop and Father to Men of impious Principles? The facred Emperors command thee to facrifice; therefore be well advised, and do not throw away thy Life. The Holy Martyr reply'd, I am Cyprian and a Christian, and cannot sacrifice to the Gods; do as you are commanded; for in so just a Cause I need no Consultation. The Proconful displeased at his invincible Constancy, told him, That he had been long of this sacrilegious Humour, had seduced many into the same impious Practices, and shewn himself an Enemy to the Gods and Religion of the Roman Empire, and one whom the most pious Emperors could never reduce to the Observance of their holy Rites: That therefore being found to be the Ringleader of so dangerous a Sect, he should be made an Example to all those whom he had seduc'd, and that Discipline should be establish'd in his Blood. Whereupon he read his Sentence out of a Table-Book, I will that Thrascius Cyprian be beheaded. To which the holy Man only answer'd, I beartily thank Almighty God, who is pleased to set me free from the Chains of the Body. Sentence being pass'd, he was led away with a strong Guard of Soldiers, infinite Numbers of People preffing af ter, the Christians weeping and mourning, and crying out, Let us also be beheaded with him. Being brought to the

Place of Execution, which was a Field furrounded with Trees loaden with Spectators, the Martyr falling down upon his Knees, recommended his Soul to God in Prayer; after which he stript himself to a Linnen Vestment, and expected the Executioner, to whom he commanded the Sum of about fix Pounds of our Mony to be given. The pious Brethren spread Linnen Cloaths about him to preserve his Blood from being sprinkled upon the Ground; and then covering his Eyes with his Hand, the Executioner did his Office. His Body was deposited not far off by the Christians, but at Night, for fear of the Gentiles, remov'd; and with many Lights and Torches, folemnly interr'd into the Cometery of Macrobius Candidus a Procurator, near the Fish-ponds in the Mappalian Way. This was done upon the 14th Day of September, after he had been about ten Years Bishop of Carthage, being succeeded by Lucian. To give a short Character of St. Cyprian, he may be faid to have been, tho' not the greatest, yet the most useful and valuable Man, the most accurate and finish'd Writer, and the most wise and serviceable Bishop in this Age.

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Not long after the Death of St. Cyprian, the Proconful Galerius Maximus dy'd, being succeeded by one Solon, who carry'd on the Persecution with no less Severity than the other had done. In Carthage many eminent Christians were put to Death, particularly, Lucius, Montanus, Flavian, Julian, Victoricus, Primolus, Remus and Donatian; most of them of the Clergy, and St. Cyprian's Disciples. In Numidia, James and Marianus, with many others, suffer'd at Lambefa. In Spain, Fructuosus Bishop of Tarrogan, after a noble Confession of his Faith, was burnt alive, together with his two Deacons Augurius and Eulogius. In Palestine, Eusebius informs us of three eminent Confessors, Priscus, Malchus, and Alexander, who being in the Country, and asham'd to think that they lay idle and fecure, while fo many others were contending for the Crown, unanimously went to the Governor of Cæsarea, profess'd themselves Christians, received their Sentence of Death, and were made Food for the wild Beafts. Besides these, he tells us of a Woman in Casarea, who, tho' a Marcionite, underwent the same Fate. In Kome the Church continued a confiderable Time without a Bishop; but the Persecution a little abating, after almost a Year's Vacancy, the Christians made choice of Dionysius, a learned and excellent Man, who held this Dignity about eleven Years,

and was the 24th Bishop of Rome after the Apostles St. Pe-

ter and St. Paul.

And now the Roman Empire began to be more and Pollie. more afflicted by barbarous Inundations, and the Persian Zosim. Invasions, in which Valerian himself was the principal Sufferer. For after he had made some Resistance to the Goths and Scythians, he was oblig'd to turn all his Forces against Sapores King of Persia, who with a furious Progress ravaged many of the Eastern Provinces. Approaching near the Persians, he became so dishearten'd and confounded, that he despaired of Success, and would have put an End to the War by giving of Mony. Sapores offer'd to parly with him in Person upon that Subject, to which Valerian imprudently conferted. And being infatuated by God, and betrayed by Macrianus, the first Cause of his Injustice to the Christians, he was brought into an incommodious Place without a sufficient Guard; where being furrounded by the Persians, and all the Passes possessed, without any Resistance he was taken Prisoner by Sapores, who carried this old Emperor into his own Country, and treated him with Indignities below the meanest Slave. For the infulting Persian, swell'd with this prosperous Gale, made Valerian his Footstool, whenever he was disposed to take Horse; causing the greatest Monarch of the World. to whom all Nations paid Homage, to bow down his Neck for him to tread upon it, when he mounted the Saddle. This was the miserable Fate of the Persecutor Valerian, which hapned in the Year 260, he being 76 Years of Age, and having reigned near feven Years; a Prince eminent for many remarkable Excellencies, who for many Years wanted no kind of Success and Reputation, 'till at length pulling down the Vengeance of Heaven, he was feverely punish'd for his barbarous Cruelties to the Christians; which was likewise no small Punishment to the Romans, who never receiv'd fuch a publick and fignal Affront fince the Foundation of their City. Sapores was wont to rally Valerian, when he made him his Footstool, telling him, That that Posture was a greater Proof on which Side the Victory went, than all the Pictures that the Romans could make; and for a long time after the Perhans treated the very Name of a Roman with the utmost Scorn and Indignity. Valerian continued about feven Years in this miserable Servitude, notwithstanding all the Writings, all the Intercessions, and all the Threats of the greatest Potentates in the World; and at the same time was despi-

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fed and neglected by his own Son Gallienus. At length being 83 Years of Age, Sapores caus'd his Eyes to be pull'd out, and after that, his Body to be flead alive, and rubb'd with Salt, according to Agathias. But Lactantius faith that after his Death his Skin was flead off his Body, and that both that and his Bowels being tinctur'd with a red Colouring, were hung up in one of the Temples of the Perfran Gods, to be a perpetual Memorial of so remarkable a Triumph, by which they might always put the Roman Ambaffadors in mind of it, and from so uncommon a Spectacle, warn them not to prefume too much upon their own Power, but to remember Valerian's Fall.

A. D. 260. GALthe 33d Roman Emperor. Polhio. Zofim. Orofins.

. Valerian being taken Prisoner, his Son Gallienis in course remain'd Emperor of Rome, being now about 41 Years of Age, and a Person sufficiently noted for his LIENUS Eloquence and Learning, but more for his impious and profligate Life. This Reign was more confus'd and calamitous than any of the preceding; and Heaven and Earth feem'd equally to threaten the Destruction of the Roman Empire. In the Beginning of it the Sun was clouded and darkned, so that it did not appear for many Days: Strange and difmal Earthquakes overthrew Cities and stately Edifices, destroying great Numbers of People, and shaking the Lands fo terribly, that the hidden Bowels of the Earth, and the stupendous Caverns were laid open, from whence flow'd vast Streams of Salt Water. The Sea overswell'd its Banks, and broke into many Continents, drowning Countries, Cities, and People; and so violent a Pestilence rag'd, that in Rome, no less than 5000 Persons dy'd in a Day. Besides which, the whole Empire was dangerously invaded on all Parts: The Germans over-run Rhatia and the Alps, and pass'd into Italy as far as Ravenna; the Allemans also wasted Gaul, and enter'd Spain to the City of Tarragon: The Goths and Scythians ravag'd all Pontus, and a great Part of leffer Afia; and in Europe, all Greece, Macedonia, and their Confines. Dacia beyond the Danube was entirely lost to the Quadi and Sarmatians, who also seiz'd on Pannonia; and the Persians and Parthians having already gain'd Mesopotamia, posses'd themselves of a great Part of Syria. About the same Time the Soldiers in all Parts electing their own Generals, advanced no less than Thirty almost at one Time, who assuming the Title of Emperors, are generally recorded by the Name of the Thirty Tyrants; who being opposite to each other, and

Gallienus, the Empire by their Means was more severey harrass'd and oppress'd by its own Forces, than by oreign Devastations: Only these Usurpers, who were generally valiant Men, did oftentimes secure the Empire

from barbarous Nations.

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Among these thirty Usurpers, the two first were Post- Pollies bumus, who set up in Gaul, and Ingennus in Pannonia, Enfeb. both valiant Commanders. Gallienus immediately undertook the latter, flew both him, and overthrew the Goths; in which Victories he used incredible Cruelties, destroying all the living Persons in one City. But the former was so powerful, that he maintain'd his Authority for seven Years; and Ingenuus, notwithstanding his Death, was succeeded by Regillianus, who preserved his Power in Pannonia for three Years. So that by means of these, and many other Usurpers, Gallienus retired himself to Rome, regarding little either of his own or his Father's Concerns; and while the whole World was infelted with Wars and Desolations, he for the most part continu'd in the City abandon'd to Ease and Luxury, and surrounded with the softest Pleasures and Delights. And when he was informed that Ægypt had revolted, that Gaul was lost to Usurpers, that Asia was ruin'd by Earthquakes and the Scythians, and that other Provinces were in danger, he return'd Answers with so much Negligence and Remissness, as if he had utterly forgot his Office and Dignity. But notwithstanding his Carelessness and Disregard to the Publick, yet he had so much Sense of publick Calamities, as from his Father's Misfortunes to take the Measures of his Carriage towards the Christians. He saw that while his Father favour'd the Christians, Heaven smil'd upon his Defigns, and his Affairs succeeded in an uninterrupted Course of Prosperity; but that when he once began to bear hard upon them, the Tide turned, and the Divine Vengeance fell both upon him and the Empire. Therefore, contrary to the Practices of former Emperors in the like Circumstances, he wisely resolved to give Ease to the innocent Christians, and accordingly by his Edicts he entirely relax'd the Persecution, and allow'd them a full Freedom in the Use of their Religion. This was done in the Month of October, A. D. 260; from which Time the Church of God had a long Peace of above 40 Years; tho' it was not wholly without Trouble and Interruptions, as well as Martyrs. About the Beginning of this Time of Indulgence, Demetrian Bishop of Antioch VOL. II dy'd,

dy'd, after he had held this Dignity about eight Years; and was succeeded by Paul of Samosata, a Person sufficiently condemned for his intolerable Avariee and Ambition, who continued in the See about ten Years, and was the 15th Bishop of Antioch after the Apostles.

A. D. 261. Gallie.

Pollio.

The Edices of Gallienus for some time had not their defir'd Effects in all Parts of the Empire; for Macrianus, the great Enemy to the Christians, taking Advantage from thefe confus'd Times, let up for Emperor with his two Sons Macrianus and Quietus, and possess himself of a confiderable Part of the East, together with Egypt. In the fame time Alexandria was fill'd with Factions, and Seditions, and fo much Confusion, that Bishop Dionysius, now return'd to his City, was compelled to transact all Affairs with his Friends by Letters, 'it being safer as he tells us, for a Man to travel from the East to the West, than to e pass from one Part of Alexandria to another, so inhuman and barbarous were the Outrages committed there. This was facceeded by a cruel Famine, and that by a dreadful Plague, which over-run both City and Country, and in a manner fwept away all that the other Calamities had spared. It mow'd down both Gentiles and Christians, and turned the Paschal Solemnity into Days of Weeping and Mourning; all Places were filled with dying Groans, and Sorrows either for Friends already dead, or those ready to depart. And here it is remarkable, that while the Gentiles abandon'd their dying Friends, and fled from them as from certain Death, the Christians, without any Regard to their own Lives, boldly ventur'd into the thickelt Dangers, daily vifiting, affifting and relieving their fick and infected Brethren, chearfully taking their Pains and Differences upon them, and often expiring with them. And when many of those thus attended, recover'd and hiv'd, they dy'd themselves, as if by an unheard of Piece of Charity they had willingly taken their Difeases upon them, and dy'd to fave them from Death. The most confiderable both of Clergy and People chearfully met a Death that deferv'd a Title little less than that of Martyrdom: They embrac'd the Bodies of the Dead, closed their Eyes, laid them out, wash'd and drest them up in their Funeral Ornaments, took them and carry'd them to their Graves, it not being long before others did the fame Offices for them. During the Time of this Pettilence, and before, Dionyfins the Bishop was warmly engag'd in the Confutation of the Errors of Subellius, who had confoun-

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ded the three Persons of the Holy Trinity, and brought over many to his Opinions. But as it ufually happens to most Men, while he manag'd the Caufe with too much Zeal and Fervency, he bent the Stick too much the contrary Way, afferting not only a Distinction of Persons. but also a Difference of Effence, and an Inequality of Power and Glory. For which he is severely censured by St. Bafil, and some of the Ancients, arone who in a great Measure open'd the Gap to those Arman Impleties that afterwards broke in upon the World. Tho' St. Baffl could not but do him to much Justice, as to fay, That it was not any ill Meaning, but only an over-vehement Defire to confute his Adversary, that betray'd him into those anwary, and inconsiderate Affertions. Some Bishops of Pentapolis immediately took Advantage of the Affertions. and going over to Rome, represented the Danger of them to Dionyfius Bishop of Rome, This Case was folernaly discuss'd in a Synod at Rome, which was the second we read of in that City, and Letters written to Diongfins of Alexandria concerning this Matter, who in four Books and an Apology refuted both the Errors of Sabellins, and vindicated himself, declaring his Sense more explicitly in this Controversie, all which may be feen at large in Arbanatius, who with infinite Pains vindicated this his Predeeeffor, as a Man found and Orthodox, and who was never condemn'd by the Governors of the Church, or held those dangerous Errors which Arrise broach'd afterwards

In the mean time the Confusions in the Empire encreas'd Pollie more and more; and among others, Valens and Pife both Eufeb. fer up for Emperors; the former in Achaia, and the latter in Thessaly; but in a short time Piso was ruined by Vas lens, and Valens was flain by his own Soldiers. The Deaths of these Usurpers much enlarg'd the Power and Dominions of Macrianus in the East, who while Odenathus, a valiant Prince of the Palmyrines, was successfully warring against the Persians, now found an Opportunity Gallie. to afflict the Christians in his Parts. Among these, we have an Account of Marinus a military Officer in Cafaren; who upon his being promoted to a Centurion's Place, was immediately accused before the Governor of being a Christian; and tho' he was a Man eminent both for De-Rent and Riches, he was only allow'd three Hours Respire for Deliberation. During which Space, Theotheris Bishop of the City, carry'd him to his Church, and at

A. D. 262.

the Altar shewing him his Sword and the holy Gospel; he demanded of him which he would chuse. Marinus freely chusing the latter, Theoctemus bad him adhere to that, and he should obtain his Reward. Whereupon with a noble Courage, he made Confession of his Faith before the Tribunal, and immediately after he was hall'd away, and beheaded. His Body was foon after taken up by Astirius a Roman Senator, and a Person sam'd for his Christian Boldness, as well as his Acquaintance with the Emperors and greatest Men, who carry'd it upon his own Shoulders, richly adorn'd it, and honourably bury'd it. Of this Man Ensebius observes, that many marvellous Things have been related: Particularly one at Casarea Philippi, where at certain Springs at a solemn Festival, a Pagan Sacrifice was wont to be cast into the Water, which by the Power of the Devil, would immediately vanish out of Sight. Astyrius finding this extoll'd as a great Miracle, and being present, and seeing many stricken with Admiration at it, lifted up his Eyes to Heaven, and befought the supream God by Jesus Christ, That he would rebuke this Devil, and command him to cease his Delusions; upon which the Sacrifice immediately floated upon the Water, and the pretended Miracle ever after ceased.

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And now the impious Macrianus being in a Manner Emperor of all the East, became unsatisfy'd with his prefent Usurpations, and resolved to march towards Rome, to make a Conquest of the West also. Therefore pushing forwards with 45000 Men through the leffer Afia into Thrace and Achaia, he was met by Aureolus, Commander of the Legions in Illyricum and Dalmatia, who in one Battel put an End to all his aspiring Attempts, overthrowing and flaying both him and his Son Macrianus. Upon which 30000 of the Soldiers went over to Aureolus, which so strengthen'd his Interest, that he, like other Generals, assum'd the Title of Emperor, and became so powerful, that Gallienus, who was many Ways diverted, thought fit to enter into Articles with him, and make a Peace, which continu'd firm most of his Reign. Soon after the Death of the Persecutor Macrianus, Gallienus again sent out his Edicts in Favour of the Christians, particularly this following Refeript, directed to Dionyfins of Alexandria, Pinners, Demetrius, and the rest of the Bishops: We have given Order that the Indulgence of our Bounty shall be extended throughout the World, that all Religious Places shall be freed from Force and Violence. Wherefore ye also may

may freely enjoy the Benefit of our Rescript, so as no Man shall dare to vex or molest you, and what you now may lawfully enjoy, has been long since granted by Us. And for this End Aurelius Cyrenius our High-Steward, shall keep the Copy of this Edict which we have now granted. The like Rescript he also sent to other Bishops, giving them the free Liberty of the Cametria, the Places where they bury'd their Dead, and often affembled for their Religious Solemnities, especially the Memorials of their Martyrs. This was most grateful News to the Christians, especially to Dionysius at Alexandria, where they had suffered so severely. About this time, this indefatigable Bishop was concerned in a new Controversie occasion'd by an Agyptian Bishop named Nepos, who understanding the Promises of the Gospel in a gross Sense, and maintaining Christ's thousand Years Reign upon the Earth with inflexible Obstinacy, compos'd a Book call'd A Confutation of Allegorists, wherein he endeavour'd to prove his Opinion out of the Apocalypse. He brought over many to his Opinion in that Part of Agypt call'd Arsinoe, which unhappily proved an Occasion of Schism and Division in those Churches. Dionysius, as a diligent Governor, judg'd it expedient to examine this Doctrine publickly; and because they generally look'd upon Nepos's Book as an unaniwerable Treatile, he confuted it viva voce, and after three whole Days Difpute, which was managed with all imaginable Wisdom and Calmness, he brought all things to an amicable Accommodation. After which, he wrote two Books against Nepos's Opinion; in the first of which he delivered his own Opinion upon this Question; and in the second annex'd the Reasons, and the Testimonies drawn from the Revelations. In which last, ' tho' he look'd upon the Apocalypse as written by an inspired Author, yet he could not be brought to believe that it was written by John the Evangelist, but by another of the same Name.

After the Death of Macrianus, new Disturbances arose Pollie. in the East; Balista his General, set up for Emperor in Syria, and retained his Authority for two or three Years; and Amilian Governor of Agypt follow'd his Example, and seized upon that important Kingdom, to the great Oppression of the Christians in Alexandria. At the same time Prince Odenathus in Defence of the Roman Empire, gained extraordinary Advantages against Sapores King of Persia, which so affected Gallienus, that in the midst of his Pleasures, he made a solemn Triumph for those Vi-

ctories.

ctories, notwithstanding his Father Valerian was still un-

der a miserable Servitude, and in the Hands of a defeated Monarch. In the same Year also the Goshs and Scythians made further Irruptions, ravag'd Greece and the leffer Aha, and plunder'd the famous Temple of Diana in Bobefus. They made unheard of Devaltations, and carry'd away many Christians into their own Countries; which Providence made use of for a further Spreading and Propagation of the Gospel. In this general Confusion most Persons took advantage of their Neighbours Missortunes, and many of the weaker Christians turn'd Renegado's, and pillaged their Fellow-Christians, and some under the Pretence of finding, flole, or at least detain'd the Goods of others. This occasion'd an Asian Bishop to write to Bimon Gregory of Neogafarea, to beg his Advice what to do Gallie. in this fad State of Affairs. Gregory by Emphrofinus fent back a celebrated canonical Epiftle, fill extant, wherein he prescribes the several Stations and Orders of Ponitents. particularly centuring their inordinate Avarice, and thowing how unsuitable such Actions were to Christians, and how abhortent to God; but much proce inhuman in f these calamitous Times, to spoil the Oppressed, and in-rich themselves by the Ruins of their miserable Brethren. But fince some pleaded they did not fical, but only took what they sound, he informed them, that if they found a-' my thing, they were obliged to reftore it, tho' belonging to their Enemies, much more to their Friends, and Fellow-Sufferers. And if any thought that their being Lofers themselves was a sufficient Warrant to detain what they found, he let them know, that this was to justifie one Wickedness with another; and because the Goths had been Enemies to them, they would become Goths and Barbarians to others. But fince many had openly join'd with them in afflicting their Brethren, they were to be excluded the Communion of the Saints, and not to be re-admitted till by a just Penance according to the

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A. D.

263.

to the Church. Still the Confusions in the Empire continued, or rather encreas'd; and now Saturnians a valiant Commander, set up for Emperor in the Borders of Scythia, and continu'd under that Title about three Years. Regillianus in Pannoma, after three Years Usurpation, and great Service perform'd against the Sarmatians, was stain by the Roxolani Amilian at the fame time was closely beer Russians. Geg'd

Crime, they had made a publick and folemn Satisfaction

sieg'd in Alexandria, and after many Hardships and Mireries to the Citizens and Christians, he was taken Prisoner, and afterwards put to Death in Prison. But the famous Odenathus was more successful, who not only defeated Baliffa, one of the Usurpers, and repell'd all the Power of the Persians, but so far establish'd his Authority in all the East, that Gallienus, with the Senates Content, gave Gallie. him what he had before usurp'd, and made him Augustus, and his Equal in the Empire. His Usurpation was the most honourable, and prov'd more advantagious to the Empire than any other; and he continu'd, with his Son Herod, in full Power about four Years; so that the Eastern Parts of the Empire remain'd in a tolerable Degree of

Peace and Regularity.

About the Beginning of this Prince's Reign, Paulus Sa- Enge. mosatanus, who had been near four Years Bishop of Anti- Athan. och, began openly to vent several Hetrodox Opinions; afferring that there was but one Person in the Godhead; that our Saviour was a Holy, but a meer Man, who came not down from Heaven, but was of a pure Earthly Original; that the Word (the same with the Father) did sometimes refide in him, and sometimes depart from him, with some other dangerous Propositions of the like nature. Besides all, he was highly obnoxious in his Morals, covetous without Bounds, heaping up vall Riches, partly by Fraud and Sacrilege, partly by unjust Vexations of his Brethren, partly by fomenting Differences, and taking Bribes to affilt the weaker Party, He was also proud and ambitious beyond measure, affeeting Pomp and fecular Power, and to be stil'd a temporal Prince rather than a Bishop, walking through the Streets with a folemn Attendance and Crowds of People after him. In the Church he caus'd an high Throne to be erected, and a Place call'd Secretum, after the manner of Civil Magistrates; and being upon the Bench, he was wont to stamp with his Feet, and frown upon those who did not theatrically shout and applaud his Discourse, in which he generally reflected upon his most eminent Predecessors, magnifying himself as far above them all. Instead of those Hymns that were ordinarily sung in Honour of our Lord, he taught some of his Proselyted Females upon the Easter Solemnity to chaunt out some to his Commendation; procuring also the Bishops and Presbyters in the neighbouring Parts to publish the same Things of him in their Sermons to the People, some of his Proselytes not fearing to affirm, That he was an Angel come down

A. D. 264.

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down from Heaven. He was moreover vehemently suspected of Incontinency, maintaining in his House some Women of exquifite Beauty, contrary to the Canons of the Church, and to the great Scandal of Religion. And that he might be the less disturb'd, he endeavour'd to debauch his Clergy, conniving at their Irregularities, and corrupting others with Pensions; and those whom he could not seduce by evil Arts, he aw'd by Power, and his mighty Interest in the Princes and Potentates of those Parts, particularly in Odenathus's Queen Zenobia; so that they were oblig'd with Sorrow to bewail at home what they durst not declare abroad. To rectifie these Mischies in the Church, most of the chief Bishops in the East resolv'd to meet in a Synod at Antioch, which was the Second in this City. The principal Bishops that affished, were Firmilian of Cappadocia President, Gregory of Neocasarea and Athenodorus, his Brother of Pontus, Helenus of Tarfus, Nicomus of Iconium, Himenaus of Jerusalem, Theotecnus of Cafarea, befides a great Number of others, as well Presbyters as Bishops. Dionysius of Alexandria was earnestly invited to this Synod; but not being able to travel, he acquainted them with his Judgment of the Matter by way of Letters; and in his Epistle to the Church of Antioch, to shew his Resentment, he refus'd to give Paul so much as the Civility of a Salutation. The Synod being fate, and the Matter being canvass'd; the crafty Heretick saw it was in vain to contend, therefore he dissembled his Sentiments, palliated his Disorders, confess'd and recanted what he was not able to conceal, and by a feigned Repentance, fecured his Continuance in that honourable Place which he held in the Church.

Euseb. . Gr. Nys.

A. D.

265.

Gallie.

Shortly after the Synod at Antioch, the great Dionysius dy'd at Alexandria, to the great Loss of that Church, after he had most wisely and piously govern'd it about seventeen Years. He was a Man admirably skill'd in the Opinion, Discipline and Precepts of the Church; and his Memory was continu'd at Alexandria by a Church dedicated to him; but it slourish'd much more in the incomparable Virtues of his past Life, and those excellent Writings he lest behind him, of which far the greatest Part, are now lost. He was succeeded by Maximus a Presbyter of Alexandria, who held this See about eighteen Years, and was the 15th Bishop of Alexandria, after the Evangelist St. Mark. Not long after the Death of Dionysius, another great Man lest the World, namely Gregory Thaumaturgus, Bishop

Bishop of Neocasarea, after he had happily and gloriously govern'd that City about twenty fix Years. A little before his Death, being sensible that his Time drew near, he sent about the City and the Neighbourhood to make a strict Enquiry whether there were any that were yet Strangers to the Christian Faith. And being told that there were but seventeen in all, he sigh'd, and lifting up his Eyes to Heaven, appeal'd to God how much it troubled him that he shou'd leave any Part of Mens Salvation incompleat, but withal he acknowledg'd it an extraordinary Mercy, that when he himself had found but seventeen Christians at his first coming thither, he should leave but seventeen I-dolaters to his Successor. Having heartily pray'd for the Conversion of Infidels, and their Consummation of Glory, he calmly and peaceably refign'd up his Soul to God; having first enjoyn'd his Friends not to procure him any distinct and peculiar Place of Burial, but that as in his Life time he had carried himself as a Pilgrim and Foreigner, in the World claiming nothing for himself, so after Death he might enjoy the Portion of a Stranger, and be cast into the common Lot. After the Death of this Man, and of Firmilian Bishop of Cappadocia, the remaining Part of this Century had not such great Lights in the Church as be-

No Year in the Reign of Gallienus was without Rebel- Pallin. lions and Usurpations; and in this Trebellian was set up Boxom. by the Isauri in Asia Minor. Against whom Gallienus sent an Agyptian Commander call'd Causifoleus, who in a bloody Battel defeated and flew him; but could never reduce the Isauri, who by reason of their inaccessible Country, preserv'd themselves after this from the Power of the Romans. In these Times of general Commotion Africk also made choice of a Tribune called Celsus, a Person of no small Reputation, and proclaim'd him Emperor; whose Authority lasted but seven Days before he was slain, and great Indignities were offer'd to his Body. And now again the Goths made terrible Ravages and Devastations in the lesser Asia, Galatia, and Cappadocia, and carried away infinite Numbers of all forts of People. Among these Captives were many Christians, and particularly those of the Clergy, who by their unblamable Lives, and their miraculous Cure of Diseases and possessed Persons, not only polish'd and refin'd these barbarous People, but daily brought over many to be baptiz'd and to embrace the Christian Religion. Their Success was so great, that many of

A. D. 266. Gallie.

the Christians, after they had Liberty to return to their own Countries, chose to continue in these strange Parts, where they could do so much Service and Honour to the Gospel. About this Time also it is believ'd that the Franks first received the Seeds of the Christian Religion.

A. D. 267.

Pollio. acc.

Odenarbus had not reign'd four Years in the East, before his Kinfman Manus treacherously slew him, and Gallie, caus'd himself to be proclaim'd Emperor; but in no long time after he met with the same Fate. Zenobia Wife to Odenathm, remain'd a Widow, with three young Sons, Herennianus, Timolaus and Vaballato; and immediately took the Government upon her, and began to rule with a masculine Courage and Conduct, mewing such Wisdom and Valour as is incredible; on the one Side warring against the mighty Persians, and on the other defending her felf against all the Power of Rome for fix Years together. All Writers take some notice of the Virrues and Accomplishments of this Princels, who was extraordinarily learn'd in many Arts and Languages, and had her felf abridg'd the Alexandrian and all the Oriental Historians; and the the was a Yew by Education, yet the was willing to understand the Christian Religion, and accordingly had address'd her felf to Paulus Sumofusanus before-thention'd, who the better to make it agreeable to her Tafte, betray'd his Fidelity, and taught distronourable Notions of our Saviour. This Lady is celebrated for her uncommon Chaffity, and for being liberal and temperate in all things, very fevere upon occasion, yet no ways defective in Goodness and Clemency; brave and magnanimous, as descending in one Line from the Kings of Egypt, and in the other from the Kings of Babylon, and in all Things acting as if the had been Empress of the World. Gallienns, who fear'd Odenathus, at first despis'd Zenobia; but she soon let him understand his Error, by her frequent overthrowing his Forces, particularly those under Heraelianus.

At the same Time Gallienns had no less Difficulties to encounter in the West, and in Gaul, where Postbumus having reign'd about seven Years, was flain by Lollianus, who fet up for himself. This was succeeded by the Death of Posthumus's Colleague Victorinus, together with his Sons, as also of one Marius, who all had the Titles of Emperors; whose Deaths caus'd Tetricus to proclaim himself Emperor, and he became so successful as to retain his Authority fix Years. At the same Time the Goths again ravag'd Masia, and the Hernsi did the same in Asia and Greece

Pallia. &c.

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So that in all Parts of the Empire were committed infinite Murders, Robberies, Desolations, and all kinds of Barbarities, Tyrannies and Treasons, accompany'd with an innumerable Company of unheard of Miseries and Calamities. These were so much occasion'd by the Vices and Cruelties of Gallienus, that the chief Governors finding him incapable of defending the State, at length refolv'd upon his Death, which they found an Opportunity to effeet in a short time after, when Gallienus with his Forces belieg'd Milan, now possest by Aureglus, one of the foremention'd Usurpers. This was done in the Month of March, about the 20th Day, under the Confulthips of Paternus and Marinianus, A. D. 268. Gallienus being Forty nine Years of Age, and having reign'd about 15 Years from his first being nam'd Augustus, and near eight from the Captivity of his Father Valerian. He left all the East subject to Zenobia, Goul and the West to Tetricus, Illyricum to Aureolus, and Thrace, Macedonia, and Part of Asia Minor to the Goths and Scythians.

W. After the Death of Gallienus, Flavius Claudius A. D. by unanimous Consent was proclaim'd Emperor, who in 268. a short, time put an End to the Life and Usurpation of CLAU-Aureolus, reduc'd all his Dominions, and return'd trium- DIUS, phantly to Rame. This Emperor's Lineage and Country the 34th is uncertain; we only know that he was a Person of great Emperor. Valour and Bravery, of a strong Body and vigorous Mind, Polito. eminent for many Virtues, as Temperance, Chastity, and &c. Justice; only he was somewhat severe to the Christians. tho' the Truth of that is somewhat doubted. He made several excellent Laws, and in a short time much reform'd the Common-wealth; fo that in his short Reign there was a great Change of Affairs, and he prov'd a mighty Support to a declining Empire. His principal Care was to restore the Empire to its former Strength and Glory, being ready to expose himself to all kinds of Danger; by which he gain'd fuch a Name and Reputation, that the Moderation of Augustus, the Valour of Trajan, and the Piety of Antoninus, are said to have all center'd in Him. He first undertook a memorable Expedition against the Goths, who with other barbarous Nations, came down like an Inundation with above 320000 fighting Men. O- A. D. ver these he gain'd one of the greatest Victories that the Romans eyer knew; in which Battel were flain and taken Claud. 200000 Men, many barbarous Kings, and Persons of the highest

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highest Rank, with 2000 Ships loaden with Ammunition; so that many Houses were fill'd with Habiliments of War, and whole Cities with Prisoners and Slaves. After which he recover'd what these People had gain'd in Macedonia, Thessaly, and other Provinces; and turning into Germany, he entirely defeated an Army of 200000 of the Inhabitants of that Country. And now having re-establish'd the Roman Power, and freed the Empire from all Foreigners, he next determin'd to march against his two puissant Rivals, Tetricus in Gaul, and Zenobia in the East; but coming in the Spring near Sirmium in Pannonia, he was there leiz'd with a Pestilential Fever, which in a few Days put an End to all his great Defigns. The Romans honour'd him with a Statue of Gold of ten Foot high in the Capitol, an Honour never granted before; and also with another of Silver of 1500 Pound Weight, plac'd upon a Pillar compos'd of the Prows of Ships. He dy'd in the Month of April, under the Confulfhips of Antiochianus and Orphitus, A. D. 270. being 56 Years of Age, and having reign'd two Years and about one Month. "In this Reign flourish'd that noted Antichristian Philosopher Porphyrius; who was a Jew by Descent, first turn'd to Christianity, and afterwards apostatiz'd to Paganism, and then us'd his Wit and Learning against the Truth of the Christian Religion, and the Holy Scriptures, writing a Piece in fifteen Books upon that Subject.

A. D. 270. AURE-LIAN, the 35th Roman Emperor.

> Votife. Victor.

Upon the Death of Claudius, the Army unanimously chose Aurelian for Emperor, who was then General of the Horse, and a most valiant Commander; but his Confirmation at Rome was a little retarded by reason of Claudius's Brother Quintillus, who held the Title of Emperor for 17 Days, and then refign'd it, together with his Life. Aurelian was now about 57 Years of Age, having been bred up in War, and pais'd through many Offices; in which he perform'd many noble Exploits, and many extraordinary Actions in his Person; and particularly, as Vopiscus from Theoclius tells us, in the Wars of Sarmatia he kill'd with his own Hand 48 Enemies in one Day, and at several times above 950 Men. His uncommon Valour and expeditious Proceedings, have caus'd fome to compare him with Julius Cafar; but he much wanted his Mildness and Clemency, being naturally very severe and cruet; fo that he is justly faid to have been more fit to be General of an Army, than Governor of an Empire. His Severity to his Soldiers was very remarkable; and particularly

cularly he caus'd one, for committing Adultery with his Hostess, to be torn in sunder with two Trees forcibly bent downwards; and he frequently caus'd Criminals to be scourg'd and executed in his Sight, either to preserve a true Discipline, or to feed his Eyes with Objects of Cruelty. He was haughty as well as severe, and was the first Roman Emperor that wore a Diadem on his Head, and that us'd Robes of Gold and precious Stones; yet he happily suppress corrupt Magistrates, clear'd the Empire of Factions, and did many signal Acts of Justice. In short, he is said to have been an admirable Physician to the Pub-

lick, but only that he took away too much Blood.

The Christians enjoy'd Peace most of this Reign; but Euseb. in the first Year of it the Church was again disturb'd by Paul Bishop of Antioch, whose Immoralities and false Doctrine now became so publick and notorious, that the principal Bishops of the East thought it necessary to meet in a second Synod at Antioch to proceed against him. This Synod or Council confifted of 72 Bishops, in which Hymenaus of Jerusalem was President; for Firmilian of Cappadocia, who was expected, dy'd by the Way. Here again Paul us'd his utmost Artifices to conceal his Vices and Errors; but this fubtle Man was fully detected and laid open by Malchion a learned Presbyter of Antioch, who with great Reputation taught Arts and Sciences in this City. The Dispute he had with him was taken down in Writing by publick Notaries; and the Council, after they had wrote a Letter to Paul containing a Profession of Faith, proceeded to condemn him, and to chuse Domnus, Son to the former Bishop Demetrian, a Person every way qualify'd for the high Post he obtain'd. Domnus continu'd in the See about five Years, and was the 16th Bishop of Antioch after the Apostles. The Bishops of the Council soon after wrote a Synodical Letter to Dienysius Bishop of Rome, and to all the other Bishops in the World, to give an Account of all their Proceedings. This was written not only in the Name of the Bishops, but also of the Presbyters, Deacons, and the Laity; in which they gave an Account of all the Vices of Paul, declaring 'That they condemn'd him principally for his reviving the Erfor of Artemas, teaching that Jesus Christ was a meer Man, and that he did not exist before he was born of the Virgin Mary. But notwithstanding the unanimous Consent of the Bishops, Paul refus'd to obey their Decree; and relying upon the Power of Zenobia, whose Favour

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Favour by Flattery he had obtain'd, he kept Possession of his Habitation during the rest of her Reign, which was above two Years. Not long after this Synod, Dionyfins Bishop of Rome dy'd, Decemb. 26th, after he had held this See about eleven Years, and was succeeded by Felix I. a Roman, and Son of Constantinus, who held this Dignity above four Years, and was the twenty fifth Bishop of Rome after the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. About this time also the famous Authory of Ægypt, call'd The Great, at the Age of about 20 Years, retir'd to the Defarts of Thebair, became the Patron of many who led folitary Lives, and was the first that prescrib'd the Rules of a Monattick Life.

A. D. 271. Aurel.

Vopifc. Pullio. Eufeb.

In the first Year of this Emperor's Reign, the Marcomann and other fierce Nations of Germany came furiously down into Italy it felf, making terrible Devastations in all Places; so that Rome was in strange Consternation, all Persons in a Confusion, openly taxing the Proceedings and Management of the Emperor himself. To remedy these Mischiefs, the Romans first flew to their old Arts of Paganism, order'd the Sibyls Books to be inspected with extraordinary Solemnity, and purg'd the City with innumerable Sacrifices, Ceremonies and formal Processions, together with many Magical Operations. Awrelian upon this Occasion, writing to the Fathers, spoke slightingly of the Christians, and to remedy the impending Mischiefs, declar'd be would spare for no Costs, but was ready to offer the noblest Animals for Sacrifices, even the Captives he had taken; vainly imagining that the most National Acts of Impiety would remove publick Calamities. After this he hastned to meet the Barbarians, and after great Difficulties, he gain'd three Victories over them, and happily finish'd the War, from whence he return'd to Rome, highly incens'd at fuch as prefum'd to tax his Proceedings; at mong whom some had form'd Conspiracies against him. Having made several severe Examples of these, he resolve ed next to undertake an Expedition against the great Zenobia, accounting it a Dishonour to the Roman Empire, that a Woman should thus infult over it. And passing with a powerful Army through Sclavenia and Thrace, after some Conflicts, he enter'd the leffer Afia, and easily Suppress'd the Rebellions in Bithymia. Tyana, a City in Cappadocia, was the first Place that made any Opposition,

A. D.

272. Aurel.

2 which so inrag'd this warm Emperor, that he vow'd He would so punish the Inhabitants, as he would not leave a Dog

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alive. But, as Vapifons affures us, he was diffwaded from this Severity by an Apparition of the Ghoft of the famous Apollonius Tyamens, who told him, That if he bop'd to reign in Glory, and be a Conqueror, he would abstain from the Blood of the poor innecent Tyanmans. Which to affected him, that he immediately pardon'd the inhabitants; and when his Soldiers expected the Plunder, and reminded him of his vowing not to leave a Dog alive, he commanded them to kill all the Dogs, and to spare the People; promising moreover to ercet a Temple to Apollonias, and to fet up his Image and Statues. From this Place he march'd to Antioch and Syria against Zanobia, who not like a weak Woman, but like a brave Hannibal, provided and perform'd whatever might contribute to Victory and Glory. And after feveral Skirmishes, both Parties came to a general Battel near Emesa in Syria, which was exceeding harp, and so well manag'd by Zenobia, that Aurelian was several times driven to the greatest Extremities; but at length, after infinite Pains and Difficulties, the Emperor obtain'd the Victory, and Zenobia fled to Palmyra. Aurelian follow'd her, and befieg'd her in her chief City; but finding great Difficulties, he made a generous Offer to her of her Life, Riches and Liberties of her Subjects, if the yielded. Zenobia returning him a haughty Answer. he more closely befieged her City, and in a short time by his admirable Management, in intercepting all her Succours, he became Master both of Her and her Dominions. He put the Philosopher Longinus to death, who was A. D. Zemobia's Master, and had indicted her affronting Letter, but referv'd this masculine Queen to be an Ornament to Aurel. his intended Triumph. Zenobia being conquer'd, the Prelates of the East had address'd themselves to the Emperor, petitioning him to remove Paul from Antioch, who had join'd with Zanobia, and still kept Possession of the Bishoprick. Aurelian was fo much a Friend to the Christians. as to comply with their Requests, and order'd that Pant's Palace shou'd be deliver'd up to whom the Bishops in Italy and Rome shou'd assign it by their Letters. So that Paul had the additional Diffgrace of being depriv'd by a Secular Power; which perhaps is the first Instance of fuch Deprivation in the Christian Church.

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This prov'd a Year of great Action and Bufmess to the Vopile. Emperor Aurelian, who for Vigilance and Expedition, &c. shew'd himself a second Julius Cefar. For having conquer'd Zenobia, and got into Europe, he fuddenly return'd with

with his Army as far as Palmyra, and severely chastiz'd the revolted Inhabitants of that Place. And being once again in Europe, upon hearing of one Firmus's setting up in Ægypt, he with the like Celerity march'd a third time through Asia into Agypt, where with great Labour he recover'd that important Kingdom, and left it in Peace. From Egypt in the East, he pass'd with the utmost Expedition as far as Gaul in the West, in order to reduce Tetricus, the only remaining Rival, and Usurper in the Empire. All which he perform'd with a Success beyond all Expectation, Tetricus yielding himself up to his sole Pleasure. And now having perform'd such great and numerous Exploits, he refolv'd to triumph in Rome for his Victories obtain'd fince he was Emperor. This was one of the most magnificent Triumphs that ever was folemniz'd in Rome, in which were led an infinite Number of Prisoners and Captives of almost all Nations, with their several Offerings, a vast Variety of all Kinds of wild and strange Beasts, and a surprizing Quantity of various Arms, military Ornaments, stately Chariots, &c. Aurelian in a Chariot drawn with Stags, was on one fide attended by Tetricus, and on the other by Queen Zenobia, whose magnificent Robes, uncommon Beauty, noble Stature, and majestick Sweetness, seem'd to eclipse the Lustre of the Emperor himself. He was follow'd by all his victorious Legions, in the most splendid Attire, and with Palm and Laurel in their Hands; in which pompous Manner he enter'd the Capitol to facrifice according to the Pagan Custom; the next Day being solemniz'd with all kinds of Sports, Games and Feasts, with many extraordinary Spectacles. Contrary to his former Cruelties, he beshow'd Rewards upon his Enemies, making Tetricus Governor of a great Part of Italy, and giving Lands to Zenobia sufficient to maintain her high Quality, in which she liv'd long after, being highly esteem'd and applauded by all Men, still preserving her ancient Reputation and Dignity. After this Oftentation and Grandeur, Aurelian proceeded to many Regulations; and particularly he punish'd the false Coiners, who by length of Time had gain'd so powerful an Interest, as to raise a kind of a Civil War; so that it cost the Emperor the Lives of seven thousand Soldiers to reduce them. He likewise settled the Bounds of the Empire, and both repair'd and enlarg'd the Walls of Rome, so that according to Vopiscus, they were then almost fifty Miles in Compass. The

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The NINTH GENERAL PERSECUTION.

In the midst of this Peace and Prosperity, elevated with Pride and Security, Aurelian began to cast an evil Eye up- A. D. on the innocent Christians; and being induc'd by the Advice of some Men, he drew up several Letters and E- Aurel. dicts, defigning a fevere Persecution. But, as Eusebius observes, God was pleas'd to bind up his Arms, and while he was perusing and ready to sign his Edicts, a Thunder- Enseb. bolt from Heaven, or Lightning, fell so near his Person, Vopisco that all People judg'd him to be flain. From Lactantius we understand, that after this the Edicts were really iffu'd out; but by reason of the Emperor's Death soon after, they never reach'd all the Provinces of the Empire. This is most commonly reckon'd the Ninth General Perfecution, which began about fourteen Years after the End of the Eighth under the Emperor Valerian; but it prov'd so small and inconsiderable, that it scarce gave any Interruption to the Peace of the Church; fo that many have reckon'd that under the Emperor Adrian as one of the Ten Persecutions, and left this out of the Number. Some of the Matyrologies speak of several Martyrs under this Persecution, in Gaul and other Places; but of them we have no great Certainty. We have no fuch Affurance of any as of Pope Falix, who fuffer'd in Rome, December the 22d, after he had held this Dignity five Years wanting four Days. On the fifth of January following Entychianus was chosen into his Place, who was a Tuscan Son to Maximus, held this Bishoprick almost nine Years, and was the twenty fixth Bishop of Rome after the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. As Heaven was pleased to crush this Persecution in the Embrio, so it thought fit to punish the Persecutor shortly after, while he was beginning a new Expedition against the Persians. For having put many Persons to Death upon slight Occasions, his principal Secretary Mnestheus began to doubt his own Security, having been threatned with Death for some Offence committed, and knowing him to be nicely punctual in his Punithments, he conspired against him, and forg'd a Roll of the Names of several Persons, as tho' the Emperor had mark'd them out for Execution, adding his own, and some others that were then out of Favour, to make it appear more plaufible. Upon fight of which, the deluded Per-VOL. II. fons,

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fons, for their own Safety, agreed to affaffinate the Emperor, and resolving upon the Manner, as he pass'd with a finall Guard towards Byzantium they fet upon him, and flew him with little or no Resistance. This was done in the Month of March, in his own Confulhip with Marcelling A. D. 275. he being 62 Years of Age, and having reign'd five Years wanting about one Month.

A D. 275. TACI-TUS she 368h Roman Emperor.

Euseb.

V. The vigorous Reign of Aurelian had fo tam'd all Sorts of Persons, that after his Death no Pretenders durft appears and the Army was so far from creating an Emperor as formerly, that they fent to the Senate to beg of the Fathers to make the Election, and that they would readily obey them. On the other fide, the Senate defir'd the Soldiers to elect a Person, which they also declin'd; so that in paffing and exchanging of Compliments, there was an Interregnum of above fix Months, which was never known fince the Establishment of the Empire. In which Space of Time the World was without an Emperor, and the Empire govern'd by the Senate; a Change almost incredible, after so many late Distractions, and ambitious Attempts on the State. At length, overcome with Petitions from the Armies, the Senare made choice of a worthy Person nam'd Tacitus, a Consular Man of 75 Years of Age, but of unknown Lineage and Country. This Elethion was attended with so much Joy and Satisfaction, that the Senators made publick Processions, offer'd many Sacrifices, expos'd their Images, cloth'd themselves in White, and feasted as if they thought that the Days of their happy Fore-fathers were revived. About the Beginning of this Emperor's Reign Domnus Bishop of Antioch dy'd, after he had continu'd about five Years in the See from the Deprivation of Paulus; and was succeeded by Timeus, who held this Dignity about fix Years, and was the feventeenth Bishop of Antioch after the Apostles. The Emperor Tacitus made it his Business to reform many Abuses and Corruptions in the City, made several excellent Laws and Ordinances, and in all Things shew'd himself a moderate and good Man as well as a wife and careful Governor. Having reign'd about four or five Months, he undertook an Expedition against the Persians and Scythians in Asia; and arriving at Tarfus, St. Paul's Birth-Place in Cilicia, he there dy'd; some say of a natural Disease, and others that he was kill'd by the Soldiers. This hapned about the 12th Day of April, or a little after, A.D. 276. he having reign-

ed between fix and feven Months, it being a little above a Year from the Death of Aurelian.

Upon the Death of Tacitus, the Commanders of the Army A. D. immediately drew the Soldiers into the Field; and without 276. any former Request, or Agreement, began to shew, how ne- PROceffary it was to chuse a Person eminent for his Valour, Ho- BUS nefty, Piety, Clemency, and PROBITY; which Speech the 37th was us'd in many Parts of the Army, and Probity always Roman Emperor, brought up the Rear of the Virtues. Whereupon the Soldiers took the Hint, and without any private Conferences, unanimously cry'd out, Let Probus be Emperor! and immediately proclaim'd him with great Acclamations. About the fame Time Florian, Brother to the late Emperor, was proclaim'd Emperor by some other Legions; but continu'd not long in that State before he perceiv'd the Interest of Probus too powerful for him; and perceiving his Soldiers ready to abandon him, after two or three Months Reign, he follow'd the Example of many diffressed Pagans, and dy'd by opening his Veins. Probus was now about 44 Years of Age, born of a noble Family in Pannonia, and train'd up to Wars from his Youth. He foon became famous and renown'd for his great Valour and Conduct, and perform'd many noble Exploits under Valerian, Gallienus, Claudius and Aurelian; for which he was rewarded with many Civick Crowns, Collars, Bracelets, Lances and Banners, with other military Ornaments and Privileges. He was fo much effeem'd by Aurelian, that he defign'd him for his Successfor: and his courteous Demeanour and excellent Conduct in all his Offices made him generally admir'd and belov'd. So that his Arrival at the Empire prov'd the Joy and Satisfaction of the whole State; and Manlius Statianus congratulated the Senate in having an Emperor fo fublimely excellent, as to surpass Trajan, Adrian, the Antonines, and the best of his Predecessors.

The Christians enjoy'd a profound Peace under all this Engle, Reign, and in the Beginning of it flourish'd Anatolius Bi. Epiph. thop of Laodicea in Syria, but born in Alexandria; a Man &cc. of profound Learning, admirable skill'd in human Arts and Sciences. He had formerly shew'd his great Address and Politicks in the Siege of Alexandria in Emilian's Time; which by his prudent Councils he faved from an intire Destruction that threatned it. Being made Bishop of Laodicea, he wrote feveral Treatifes, as ten Books of Arithmetick, a remarkable Piece concerning Easter, leaving

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A. D. 277. Probi

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behind feveral Monuments of his Learning and Accuracy, particularly in relation to the Holy Scriptures, of which we have but little Remains. Tho' the Church enjoy'd Peace without, it was now extreamly diffurb'd within by the Appearance and Rife of new and abominable Hereticks call'd Manichees, whose Original from Manes in short was in this manner. One Terebinthus, Disciple to Scithianus a Magician, broaching many dangerous Errors, was oblig'd to fly from Palestine into Persia, where retiring to a Widow's House, he was murder'd. This Widow being Heiress to the Mony and Books of Terebinthus, bought a Slave nam'd Curbicus, whom she afterwards adopted, and caus'd him to learn these Books, and to be instructed in all the Sciences of the Persians. After her Death, this Man to blot out the Memory of his former Condition, chang'd his Name to that of Manes; and being swell'd with a mighty Opinion of himself, he pretended himself an Apostle of Christ, and that he was the very Comforter promis'd by our Saviour. He maintain'd that there were two Principles; the one of Good, from whence proceeded the good Soul of Man, and the other Evil, from whence proceeded the evil Soul of Man; together with the Body, and all Corporal Creatures. He allow'd his Disciples to wallow in all Impurities, and forbad their giving Alms to any but their own Sect. He gave out that the Souls of his Followers went through the Elements to the Moon, and afterwards to the Sun to be purify'd, from whence they went to God, to whom they did rejoin: And the Souls of other Men, he faid, went to Hell, to be fent into other Bodies. He taught that Christ had his Residence in the Sun, the Holy Ghost in the Air, Wisdom in the Moon, and the Father in the Abyss of Light. He deny'd the Refurrection, condemn'd Marriage, and taught Pythagoras's Metempsychosis, That Christ had no real Body, That he was neither dead nor risen, and that he was the very Serpent that tempted Eve. He forbad the Use of Milk, Cheefe, Eggs and Wine, as Creatures proceeding from the evil Principle. He us'd a different Form of Baptism from that of the Church, taught that Magistrates were not to be obey'd, and condemn'd the most lawful Wars. It were almost impossible to rehearse all the absurd and impious Tenets of this Herefiarch; infomuch that Pope Leo, faid that the Devil reign'd in all other Herefies, but had rais'd his very Throne in that of the Manichees, who had embrac'd all the Errors and Impieties that the Spirit of Man

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was capable of; for what soever Profanation was in Paganism, carnal Blindness in Judaism, unlawful Curiosity in Magick, or Sacrilege in other Heresies, did all center in this. This Man promising the King of Persia to cure his Son, the Father fent away all the Physicians that might have cur'd him, and the Patient soon after dy'd; whereupon Manes was imprison'd, from whence he escap'd; but being again apprehended, he was flead alive, and his Carcass thrown to the wild Beafts. Notwithstanding the extravagant Notions, and cruel Death of this Herefiarch, his Followers daily encreas'd, spread in many Nations, and became very numerous and mischievous in the fourth Century. The Manichees were divided into Hearers and the Elect: Of the Elect twelve were call'd Masters, in Imitation of the twelve Apostles; besides them, there was a Thirteenth,

who was a kind of a Pope amongst them.

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While these Mischiess hapned in the Church, the Em- Vapise. peror Probus was very careful in preserving the Peace of &:. the State; and with a powerful Army march'd into Gaul, now over-run by the Germans, who had posses'd themtelves of the principal Parts of that Country. Here many tharp Battels were fought, one of which continu'd two Days, being only interrupted by the Night; and was continu'd with that Obstinacy, that the Victory often enclin'd to either Side; 'till Probus by his excellent Management prevailed, and gave them a total Overthrow. In this and other Battels, he kill'd no less than 400000 Men, reduc'd nine Kings, recover'd 66 of their principal Cities, and made many Devastations in their Country; for which Advantages the Romans made great Feastings and Rejoicings, and many solemn Sacrifices and Thanksgivings to their Gods. Probus, after these Successes, march'd with his victorious Army into Illyricum and Dalmatia, which in a great measure were over-run by the Sarmatians; and this Propi War was no less difficult than the last, by reason of the Multitudes and Fierceness of those Nations. After several Battels, in which he shew'd himself a most experienced and valiant Commander, he entirely subdu'd them, cleared the Roman Provinces, and flew and took most of them. From thence he marched with great Expedition into Thrace, and further North, to revenge all the former Infults of the Goths; but the near Approach of this warlike Emperor immediately caused them to yield Obedience, and they were allow'd the Privilege of Confederates and Allies of the Roman Emperor. About this Time flourish'd Archeiaus

A. D. 278.

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> Archelaus Bishop of Chaschara in Mesopotamia, an eminent Prelate, who understanding that the Heretick Manes had wrote a Letter to pervert a Person of Quality, and apprehending his Doctrine would be very infectious in his Diocels, oblig'd him to a Conference, in which he confounded him to that degree, that he forced him to quit the

Country.

A. D. £79. Probi

Vopifc. Enfeb.

The Emperor Probus having given Peace to Europe, pafsed over into Asia to make War with the Persians and Parthians; and in his March subdued Isauria in the lesser Asia, and divided the greatest Part of it among his old Soldiers. Then marching into Syria and the East, he defeated a certain People call'd Blemii, who had posses'd themselves of Part of Arabia and Palestine. Upon the Emperor's approaching the Confines of Persia, Vararanes the King, tho' one of the most powerful Monarchs in the World, immediately submitted to restore what he had taken from the Empire, and to fuch other Articles as Probus required. And now having no Enemies in the Empire, this victorious Emperor return'd into Europe, and entred Rome in a most solemn Triumph, which some by Mistake say was the last in that Kind known in Rome. All Mens Mouths were filled with the Praises of this Conqueror, and his Triumph was most noble and magnificent, being attended with Soldiers of all Nations, as well as Captives, and many renown'd Commanders, particularly Diocletian, Carus, Constantius and Maximian, who being formed by the Discipline and Instructions of Probus, became afterwards Emperors themselves. The following Day was solemniz'd with Fealts, Games, and Spectacles; in which was greater Variety of Huntings, and Encountring wild Beafts, than was ever known in Rome. For which purpose a Mountain and a large Grove of Trees were set in the Circus Maximus; which Place being now like a Forest, a thoufand Ostriches were hunted in it, a thousand Stags, a thoufand Mountain Goats, a thousand wild Boars, a thousand Fallow Deer, and other Kinds of Beafts; which the People were permitted to kill and take at their Pleasure. The next Day in the same Place were let loose an hundred vast Lions, which fill'd the Air with their Roarings, an hundred Lionesses, an hundred Lybian, and an hundred Syrian Leopards, with 300 Bears. All which was succeeded by great Numbers of Gladiators, and other warlike Pagan Exercises, to which the Romans were still extreamly addicted. Not long after this Triumph, Probus and the Empire

Chap. VI. P.ROBUS the 37th Rom. Emp.

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Empire were disturbed by domestick Pretenders and User- A. D. pers; and first by Saturniaus in Agypt, who was almost forc'd to take upon him the Title of Emperor; and next Probi by Bonofus and Proculus in Gant, the one an infatiable Vastal to Bacchus, as the other was to Venus. Probus march'd into Ægypt, and with some Difficulty subdu'd Saturnious, putting an End both to his Empire and Life at the same time. Then returning with extraordinary Expedition into Gaul, he reduc'd Bonofus and Proculus to that Extremity, that the former in Despair hang'd himself, and the latter flying into the Country, was deliver'd up by the Germans, which compleated the Emperor's Victories. He return'd to Rome with great Applauses and Congratulations; and now the Soldiers and all the Legions remained so quiet, and in such exact Obedience, that it grew to a common Saying, That the Mice dare not gnaw for fear of Probus. In the Time of this Peace and in the following Year, Timeus Bishop of Antioch dy'd, after he had held that Dignity about fix Years; and was fucceeded by Cyrillus, who continu'd in this See about eighteen Years, and Prooi was the eighteenth Bishop of Antioch after the Apostles. In whose Time flourish'd Dorothew, a worthy Presbyter of Antioch, a Person excellently skill'd in human Learning, as well as the Holy Scriptures and the Hebrew Fongue, who liv'd in great Reputation 'till he was an hundred and five Years of Age.

A. D. 281.

The Emperor Probus having again establish'd Peace in Vopile. the Empire, proceeded to the making of ieveral new Laws and Regulations; and all Men liv'd in such Quiet and Security, that Probus declar'd, That be would speedily take such a Course, as that there should be no need of Soldiers; a dangerous Sentence in this corrupt Age, which caused the Soldiers to suspect their Prince, and wish for his Removal. Besides, in these peaceable Times the Emperor would not permit them to be idle and free from Labours, but daily imploy'd them in planting Vineyards, and in many publick Works and Buildings, declaring, That Soldiers ought not to eat their Country's Bread for nothing. Having taken all necessary Care concerning a peaceable Government, according to the Greatness of his Mind, he resolved to march again into the East, designing to destroy the Kingdom of the Persians, the only remaining Enemy he had. Coming to Sirmium in Pannonia, the Place of his Nativity, out of Love to the City, he set several Thoufands of his Soldiers upon draining a Fen, and making a

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vast Foss to receive the Waters, that the Lands might become useful to the Inhabitants. The Fatigue of this Work, and his great Restraint of the Soldiers Licentiousness, so enrag'd them, that they conspir'd his Death; and taking a convenient Opportunity as he march'd towards Greece, they fet violently upon him, and flew him. They had notwithstanding so great a Veneration for him after his Death, that they erected him a noble Monument, with this Epitaph, Here lies the Emperor Probus for his Goodness justly called PROBUS; of all the barbarous Nations and Usurpers a Conqueror. His Death hapned in August or November, A. D. 282. under his own Confulship with Victorinus, he being 50 Years of Age, and having reign'd fix Years and three or four Months.

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A. D. 282. Sc. the 38th Emperor. Vopifc.

V . The Death of Probus was much lamented in Rome and the Empire, and not a little in that Army where CARUS he fell, which did him many and great Honours at his Funeral. After which the Soldiers proceeded to the Election of a new Emperor, and upon a serious Consultation, the Majority judg'd Carus, whom Probus had made Prætorian Præfect, to be the most sufficient Person, as well for his worthy Discharge of many Offices and Places of Trust, as his great Experience in Government; and thereupon they fwore Obedience to him as Emperor, to the general Satisfaction of the Army; which Election was foon after confirmed by the Senate. We find no great Certainty as to the Age and Family of Carus, nor do we read much of his Person; only Vopiscus tells us, That he was a Prince of a middle Character; yet rather to be rank'd among the good, than the bad Emperors. And he began his Reign with making a just Example of the Murderers of Probus; which remov'd that Suspicion that some conceiv'd of his being consenting to his Death. Shortly after his Election he join'd his two Sons Carinus and Numerian with him in Quality of Cafars, but not of Augusti 'till afterwards. Carinus the eldest, was wicked, dissolute, infolent, and addicted to all kinds of Viciousness; on the contrary, Numerian was valiant, wife, modest and learn'd, and adorn'd with many excellent Qualifications and Virtues.

Enfeb. Athan.

In the Beginning of this short Reign, which was all peaceable to the Christians, Maximus, Bishop of Alexandria, dy'd, after he had held that Dignity about eighteen Years, and was succeeded by Theonas, who continu'd in

this See about nineteen Years, and was the fifteenth Bishop of Alexandria after the Evangelist St. Mark. Under this Bishop there flourish'd two eminent Men in Alexandria, Theognostus and Pierius, both Disciples of Origen, and both fucceffively Masters of the great Catechetical School in that City. Theognostus wrote several Treatises, severely examin'd by Photius, but highly commended by Athanasius, both for their Reason and their Eloquence; who cites this Author as a Proof of the Divinity of our Saviour, and as a Witness of Consubstantiality, comparing the Son to the Father, as Light to the Sun, and as Vapour to Water, as being coeval, and of the same Substance. Pierius, the other, was a Man of an austere Life, and of a voluntary Poverty, who also composed several sorts of Treatises, extant in St. Ferom's Time, with so much Eloquence, that he was call'd the young Origen; whose Opinions he feem'd to have embrac'd not without Blame.

Carus had not been long setled in his Empire, before he A D. was oblig'd to march against the Sarmatians, who understanding the Death of the Invincible Probus, came down with fuch Fury into Pannonia, that they terrify'd all Italy and the Empire. Carus after some Skirmishes, came to Battel with them, in which he had the Victory, flew 16000, Vapile. took 20000 Prisoners, and put the rest to slight. After this &c. Victory, to effect what Probus had defign'd, he turn'd all his Forces against the Persians, first making his Sons Augusti in the Month of August, giving them the Partnership of the Empire, leaving Carinus the Government of Gaul and Spain, and taking Numerian with him to the East. In

Persians in Battel, and pursuing his Victory, took both Ctefiphon and Seleucia; for which he obtain'd the Surname of Perficus. His Pride carry'd him much further, so as to allow of the Title of Lord and God; but he liv'd not long after this Impiety; for being laid fick in his Tent, there hapned a terrible Storm of Thunder and Lightning, which

this Expedition Carus proceeded with fuch Vigour and Success, that he immediately took all Mesopotamia, from whence he march'd up to the Walls of Ctesiphon, overthrew the

flew both him and many others about him. This was the only Emperor that met with fuch a Death, which was fo remarkable, that the Romans afcrib'd it to the Divine Vengeance, for endeavouring to carry his Victories beyond Ctefiphon; because an ancient Oracle had forbad to the

Romans to extend their Empire beyond the Capital City of the Persians. His Death hapned in the latter End of the Month

December, , 2'414 . 42 4

283. Cari

December, in his own Confulfip with that of his Son Carinus, having reign'd one Year and somewhat above a Month from the Death of Probus. In the same Month dy'd Eutychianus Bishop of Rome, some say by Martyrdom, after he had held that Dignity almost nine Years; and was succeeded by Caius a Dalmatian, and a Kinsman of the great Diocletian, who continu'd in this See about twelve Years, and was the 27th Bishop of Rome after the Aposses St. Pe-

Upon the Death of Carus, the Empire devolv'd upon

his two Sons Carinus and Numerian. The former by his abominable Actions rendred himself odious to all Men:

ter and St. Paul.

Votifc.

only his extravagant Feafts in Rome were pleasing to some; but the latter was look'd upon as Emperor by the Army in the East. This young Prince by his Sorrow and Tears for the Loss of his Father, had in a few Months brought fuch a Distemper upon his Eyes, that he could not behold the Light, so that he was usually carried in a close Litter, where he could not be seen. This secret Way of travelling prov'd a Temptation, and afforded an Opportunity to his Father-in-Law Aper, to affaffinate him privately in his Litter, which he effected by some mercenary Villain; and to conceal the Fact 'till he had setled his own Interest in the Army, he order'd the Litter to be carry'd as formerly, with the dead Body in it, making Report that the Emperor could not endure the Sight of any Man. But the Smell of the Body discover'd the Treason sooner than Aper expected; and the Soldiers proceeding to a new Election, fixed upon Diocletian, one of the greatest Commanders of the Age. Diacletian seeing himself thus advanced, cloathed himself with the Imperial Robe, and fate upon the Tribunal Seat, where being faluted Au-

gustus, he commanded the Murderers of Numerian to be

on the Sight of Aper, whose Name signify'd a wild Boar, Diocletian descended from his Throne, and listing up his

Hand, cry'd out to him, Be proud, Aper, that you fall by so great a Hand as mine. Upon which Words he slew

him with his own Hand and Sword, crying, Now I have killed the fatal Boar, and fulfilled the Predictions of my fu-

ture Empire. And thus began the Reign of Diocletian,

and that call'd the Diocletian Æra, upon the 17th Day of

September, A. D. 284. in the Year of the Confulships of

the two Emperors Carinus and Numerian.

brought before him, and to be condemn'd to Death.

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Chap. VII. DIOCLETIAN the 39th Rom. Emp. 651

CHAP. VII.

From the Beginning of the Diocletian Æra, to the Beginning of the Tenth and last general Persecution of the Church, usually called the Diocletian Persecution.

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Containing the Space of almost 19 Years.

The DIOCLETIAN ÆRA.

ROM the Death of Numerian, Diocletian was A. D. look'd upon as real Emperor of Rome, notwith- 284. flanding Carinus was still alive, and in Possession Dio-of a considerable Part of the Empire. This Prince was CLEborn in Dalmatia, of obscure Parentage, being generally TIAN reported to be the Son of a publick Notary; but by some, the 39th the Son of a freed Man to Anullianus a Senator. The Roman Name both of his Mother and the Town of his Birth, was Dioclea, from whence he was called Diocles, 'till he Entrop was made Emperor; and then converting a Greek Name &c. into a Roman Form, he nam'd himself Diocletianus. was now about thirty nine or forty Years of Age, and had passed through many considerable Offices, before he arrived at this high Post, which in general he discharged with great Honour and Reputation. He was remarkable for his active Diligence and military Discipline, his Sagacity and Ingenuity, his profound Cunning and Policy, and likewife his contumacious Haughtiness and Severity. Lactantins charges him both with Cowardice and Avarice, as well as Pride and Oftentation, which caused many cruel and tyrannical Practices, and great Mischies in the State. Having taken upon him the Surname of Jovius, he gave the Title of Casar to a bold Commander named Maximianus, upon the 20th Day of November, which Day Diocletian afterwards observ'd in the Celebration of his Decennalia. At the same time he abolish'd the Æra of the Battel at Actium, which the Romans had observ'd 315 Years, and establish'd a new Era, or Date of his own, call'd the Diocletian Æra, from whence the Account of following Times should begin. The Christians also ob-

ferv'd it for above 240 Years, 'till the Reign of the Emperor Justinian, it being upon their Account likewise call'd The Æra of the Martyrs, by reason of this Emperor's great Severity towards them. Not that Diocletian, or any of his Colleagues, shew'd any Severity to them in the former Part of this Reign, as many have thought; for on the contrary, during far the greatest Part of the Reign. the Christians were not only unmolested, but, as Eusebius affures us, were entrusted by the Emperors with the Governments of Provinces, were freed from the Fears of Sacrificing, were conversant in the Imperial Palaces, were made Part of the Family, and were allow'd freely and openly to make Profession of their Faith. The Emperors also shew'd an high Esteem for them, and they seem'd more acceptable to them than the rest of their Attendants; particularly Dorotheus and Gorgonius, Persons whose real Worth and excellent Behaviour, render'd them dear to all The Prelates and Bishops were greatly in Favour, and the Christian Congregations daily encreas'd to an extraordinary Degree; so that the Church had then all the outward Marks of Peace and Prosperity.

A. D. 285. Diocl.

Pallio.

Carinus, the surviving Son of Carus, still kept Possession of his Government in Gaul, and the West, giving himself up to the most abominable Kinds of Luxury and Debauchery, and removing all good and virtuous Men from his Presence and Conversation. But at length the Election of Diocletian a little rouz'd him from his Vices and Extravagancies; and being naturally bold and rash, he soon marched his Army against him, hoping to ruin him in one Battel. Upon Notice of which, Diocletian with great Expedition palt with his Forces from the East towards Gaul; and both Armies meeting in Mxsia, there began a bloody War between these two Rivals for the Universe. But this lasted not long, for in a few Days Carinus was first worsted by Diocletian, and then overthrown in a general Battel; and foon after was flain by a Tribune or Colonel of his own Army, whose Wife he had formerly abused. By this Victory Diocletian remained fole Lord of the Roman Empire. But he had not been fo long, before he receiv'd Intelligence that an infinite Number of Labourers and Peafants in Gaul, called Bagauda, had made a dangerous Infurrection in that Country, being headed by two Commanders, named Amandus and Ælianus. Diocletian accounting this War inglorious to himself, sent Maximian, whom he had made Cafar, against these Rebels; who marching into Gaul, after

after some great Hazards and Difficulties, flew great Numbers, and dispers'd the rest; so that in all Places there was Peace and Tranquility. This Expedition feems the most probable Time wherein to place that celebrated Story of the Thebean Legion, which is faid to have confifted of 6666 Christian Soldiers, under a brave Commander named Mauritius, and which for refufing to facrifice, was first decimated by Maximian, and afterwards put all to the Sword. Some place this Story eleven or twelve, and others twenty Years after; and some say it was done at Agaunum, and others at Octodurus. The Story at large is attended with fo many great Difficulties as to History, Chronology and Geography, and supported with such weak Authorities, that several learned Men have not only doubted of the Particulars, but have pronounc'd the whole a Fable. But we shall leave that to the Determination of more nice En-

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In the second Year of Diocletian's Reign, a principal Commander in Britain, nam'd Carausus, revolted, proclaim'd himself Emperor, posses'd himself of that Island, Diock and continu'd his Authority for feven Years successively. This and other Troubles arising, Diocletian, to ease himfelf of the whole Burthen, took Maximian for his Equal Entree. and Companion in the Empire, gave him the Title of Latine Augustus, and the Tribunitian Power; all which was done near Nicomedia in Bithynia, in the Calends of April. This Maximian was a Person addicted to all kinds of Viciousness and Rapines; and as Lactantins observes, had more Courage, as well as more Avarice, than Diocletian; yet his Courage confifted rather in a daring to commit enormous Crimes, than in a true Nobleness of Spirit. These two were notwithstanding wonderfully cemented in their Friendships, Inclinations and Designs; and Maximian not only behaved himself as a faithful Companion, but also as an obedient Son to Diocletian; so that they govern'd the Empire for many Years in Love and Unity, and obtain'd great Successes over their Enemies. Maximian was to preserve the Western Parts of the Empire, and had his principal Residence at Rome; where he became a Tyrant to the Senators, and the richest of the Nobility. Diocletian retain'd the Eastern and Northern Parts to himself, and most usually resided in Nicomedia, where he took upon him to erect extravagant Fabricks, opprest many Provinces with his vast Expences, and endeavour'd to make Nicomedia equal to Rome it self. At this City he winter'd this Year; and in the following Spring he march'd against

654 Cent. III. Ecclesiastical History. Book III.

against Narses King of Persia, dispersed his Forces, and oblig'd that Monarch to come to an honourable Peace A. D. with the Romans. In the same Year his Companion Maximian successfully warred against the Germans, and Diocl. other Northern Nations, which came down with great an

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Fury upon the Empire. Tho' the Emperors were Favourers of the Christians, yet the Manichees gave them so just a Prejudice, that about this time they issued out an Edict against them, directed to Julian Proconful of Africk; in which it was ordained, That the Ringleaders of a new Doctrine brought from Perfia, who had committed many enormous Impieties, should be burnt alive, together with their Writings; and that their Followers should be beheaded, and their Estates confiscated; but that Persons in high Places should only lose their Estates, and be condemn'd to the Mines. Reason of this Rescript was drawn up in such Terms, as that it might easily have reach'd the Christians in general; but we do not find that they were Sufferers by it; and the same Laws against these Hereticks, were afterwards revived by Christian Emperors. About the same Time there arose an Ægyptian Herestarch, named Hierax, said to be an Altrologer and a Magician, who denied the Re-Dioch. furrection of the Body, and taught that all married Peo-ple, and all Children dying before Years of Discretion, were excluded the Kingdom of Heaven, and that Paradife was no fensible Thing or Place, but only the Joy and Sa-

tisfaction of the Soul. He also taught that Melchisedech was the Holy Ghoft, and diftinguish'd the Substance of the Son from that of the Father, comparing it to a Lamp with two Cottons, as if there had been a middle Nature from which both should borrow their Light. His Followers were call'd Hieracitæ, or Abstinents, because they abstain'd from the Use of Wine, and some particular This Hierax composed a Treatise of the six Days Creation, all fill'd with Fables; nevertheless his affected Piety and Austerities enduc'd many to embrace his Notions.

Entrop. &c.

This Year being the twentieth from the tenth Century of the Building of Rome, Maximian celebrated some solemn Games in that City; at which time Mamertine the Orator made a remarkable Panegyrick upon him and his great Actions. In the following Year 289, Diocletian celebrated his Quinquennalia, or first five Years of his Government at Nicomedia. And now Caransus flourish'd more

Chap.VII. DIOCLETIAN the 39th Rom. Emp. 655

and more in Britain, so that we find him in the next Year A. D. reigning in Peace, and obtaining the Title of Augustus, notwithstanding all the Endeavours of Maximian to the Diocl. contrary. Maximian's Part of the Empire was not only abridg'd by Carausus, but also Diocletian's by Achilleus, a valiant Commander in Egypt, who seiz'd on that ancient Kingdom, proclaim'd himself Emperor, and continu'd as fuch about fix Years. In Africk all the Legions were drawn together in a mutinous Manner, and joining with many Robbers and Inhabitants of those Parts, seiz'd upon all the publick Rents and Tributes; and thefe from their Continuance were called Quingentiani, or Quinquagenarii. Narses King of Persia taking Advantage from these troublesome and unsetted Times, began a dangerous War upon the Empire, and invaded Mesopotamia. In these Times there flourish'd two noted Christian Writers, Victorinus and Methodius, both Bishops, and afterward Martyrs. The former was Bishop of Passaw in Pannonia, who, as St. Ferom informs us, wrote a Treatise against all Heresies, and many Commentaries upon feveral Parts of the Holy Scriptures. The latter was Bishop of Olympus or Patara in Lycia, and afterwards of Tyre in Pulestine, who wrote a large Work against Porphyry the Philosopher, an excellent Treatise about the Resurrection against Origen, another about the Pythonissa against the same Man, a Book entitul'd The Banquet of Virgins, one about Free Will, Commentaries upon the Scriptures, and other Pieces extant in St. Ferom's Time; of which we have still some small Remains.

The Emperors Diocletian and Maximian, now A. D. finding the Empire in a declining Condition by means of 201. fo many Rebellions and Usurpations at home as well as Diocl. Enemies abroad, resolved to strengthen their Interest and Authority by the Affiliance of others. Therefore meeting 8. at the City of Milan, after a solemn Consultation, they Victor. agreed. That each of them should nominate a Person to &c. be Cafar, and their Successor, and such a Person as should be able to defend the Empire, both against foreign Invaders, and domestick Pretenders. This was finally determin'd at Nicomedia, in the following Year and Calends A. D. of March; where Diocletian made choice of a fierce and 201. couragious Soldier nam'd Galerius Maximian, and sur-Diocl. nam'd Armentarius, as being born of a Cowherd in Dacia; who, the' he had shew'd great Marks of Valour,

was of a churlish and barbarous Disposition, agreeable to his Parentage. Maximian chose Constantius, surnamed Chlorus, a Person of noble Birth, vertuous and brave, Son of Claudia, Neice to the renowned Emperor Claudius II. who had gained fuch great Advantages over the Goths; and he, tho' he was nominated by the junior Emperor, was made senior Cæsar, as Mon. Pagi justly observes from Eusebius, L. 8. C. 5. These had also the Tribunitian Power granted them; and the better to be affured of their Fidelity, the two Emperors caus'd them to put away their Wives, and to marry others. Upon which Galerius married Valeria the Daughter of Diocletian, and Constantius divorced Helena, by whom he had the famous Constantine, and married Theodora, Daughter-in-law to Maximian. After this Settlement, the Wars and the Provinces were divided among these four, the two Emperors and the two Casars. All Illyricum, Asia, and the East, were allotted to Diocletian and Galerius; the former being to reduce Achilleus in Ægypt, and the latter to march against Narses King of Persia, and also against the Sarmatians. Maximian had Italy and Africk, and was to suppress the Quingentiani, and Constantius had Gaul and Britain, which he was to defend against the Northern Nations, as well as Caranfius. These Commanders did so increase the Number of the Troops, that, as Lactantius assures us, every one of the four had a greater Army, than the former Emperors had who alone governed the whole Empire. By which Means they turned the best Provinces into Defarts, became unmeasurably burthensome to the Empire, and no less insupportable than the domeflick Rebellions, and the foreign Invasions.

Maximian was very successful against the Quingentiani in Africk, and in a short time broke their united Power, and constrained them to sue for Peace. After which he marched into divers Parts of Africk, destroying the Usurpers and Robbers in those Countries; for which he was surnam'd Herculius, because Hercules was principally employed in those Kind of Exploits. But Diocketian proceeded further, and called himself Jovius from Jupiter; and rested not here; but having this Year solemnized his Decennalia at Nicomedia, like Caligula and Domitian, he impiously assumed the Title of LORD, challeng'd Divine Honours, and suffer'd his Subjects to adore him as a God. And whereas it was customary among former Emperors, to allow Petitioners to kiss their Hands, and sometimes

their

A. D. 293. Diocl.

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Chap. VII. DIOCLETIAN the 39th Rom. Emp. 657

their Cheeks; Diocletian on the contrary, by a publick Edi& commanded, That all Men without Distinction, should prostrate Themselves upon the Ground and kiss his Foot; and for the greater Magnificence, he caused his Shoes to be fet with Pearl and precious Stones of the greatest Value. In this Year Carausius, after seven Years Reign, was slain in Britain by his Companion Alectus, who notwithstanding the Power of Constantius, held that Island three Years longer, before he could be reduced. Not long after Caraufins's Death, in the following Year Maximian also solemnized his Decennalia at Rome, where he was a great Oppresser of the Nobility. At the same time Galerius was Diocl. employed against the Sarmatians and other Northern Nations, barbarous as his own Lineage, over whom he ob-

tain'd many Advantages this Year.

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About this Time, and the following Year, there flou- A. D. rished four Ecclesiasticks of considerable Note, Phileas, Hesychius, Pamphilus, and Lucian; the two former Bi-Diocl. shops, the two latter Presbyters, and all afterwards Martyrs. Phileas was Bishop of Thmuis in Ægypt, descended of a rich and powerful Family, and celebrated both for Euleb-his Eloquence and Philosophy. Helychius was Bishop of &cc. another City in Ægypt, and was chiefly remarkable for being the Corrector and Publisher of that Edition of the Septuagint, called the Alexandrian Septuagint. Pamphilus was a Presbyter of Casarea in Palestine, an intimate Friend to the famous Eusebius, who took extraordinary Pains to collect the Books of ancient Writers, and particularly those of Origen, for whom he had a more than ordinary Esteem. Lucian was a Presbyter of Antioch, a Man of great Eloquence, who apply'd himself to the Study of the Holy Scriptures, and publish'd a new Edition of the Version of the Septuagint, which was afterwards called Lucian's Edition. He is thought by some to have been the first Author of the Arian Opinion, fince most of the Heads of that Party were his Disciples. In the fol- A. D. lowing Year, and 22d day of April, died Caius Bishop of Rome, some say by Martyrdom, after he had held that Diocl. Dignity twelve Years and sour Months; and was succeeded by Marcellinus a Roman, Son of Projectus, who after a Vacancy of two Months and eight Days, entred upon the See, and continued about eight Years, being the 28th Bishop of Rome after the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul.

And now the Emperors and the Cafars became more

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and more successful against their Opposers and Enemies. In Constantius's Part of the Empire, Alectus in Britain was overthrown and flain, and that Island wholly reduc'd to the Roman Power, after ten Years Revolt. At the same time Diocletian overthrew Achillens in Ægypt, purfu'd him into Alexandria, besieged him eight Months, and at length took him, and condemned him to be devoured by Lions, and other wild Bealts. Thus Agypt was reduc'd after fix Years Revolt, where Diocletian, according to his severe Temper, inflicted the most cruel Punithments, putting many Thousands of all Sorts to Death; not only the Ringleaders and the Abetters, but all fuch as barely approv'd of the Rebellion. But Galerius was not for fuccessful against the Persians this Year, who rashly venturing with too small an Army, was overthrown, and loft the greatest Part of his Men. Diocletian was then coming from Ægypt into Mesopotamia, where Galerius meeting him, approach'd his Litter to falute him; but Diocletian, without staying, or bidding him take Horse, in a haughty Manner caused him to attend his Litter several Miles on Foot, much blaming his Conduct, and Indiscretion in these last Actions. But at length giving him Leave to depart, and retrieve his Honour, Galerius in the following Spring march'd with a powerful Army into Armenia, which Narses King of Persia had entred. In the first general Battel the Romans with great Difficulty overthrew the Persians, and Galerius pursuing the Victory, entred Narses's Camp, took his Wives, his Children, his Sifters, and many of the Nobility of Pensia, with great Riches and Booty. This Victory encreas'd the Infolence of Galerius, and no less the Apprehensions of Diocletian; for upon this, he thought himself too much degraded, to carry only the second Rank of Honour, and to be only call'd Cafar; and when at any time he received Letters with the Inscription Cafar, he was wont to cry out in a fierce and brutal Way, Must I still be Casfar? He became also so proud and elevated, as to report that Mars was his Father, and that he ought to be look'd upon as another Romulus, not confidering the Prejudice done to his Mother's Honour, of which he made no Account, while he defired to be thought the Progeny of a God. The Behaviour of Constantius was quite contrary to him and the two Emperors, who carrying himself with all Mildness and Generosity, gained the Love of all Men, and no less fuccess

A. D. 297. Diocl.

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fuccess in the Field than the other; for this Year he made a Conquest of the Lingones, and slew 60000 of their Men.

The Affairs of the Emperors now succeeding with an A. D. unusual Prosperity, Diecletian and Maximian, by a little 298. Anticipation, folemniz'd their Quindecennalia, or fifteenth Diocl. Year of their Government, the one in the East and the other in the West. From which Time they began to bear harder upon the Christians than formerly, and to shew Lastans. fome Resentments against a Sect that had so greatly tri- Enfet. umph'd over the Religion of the Empire. Diocletian was a Man infinitely superstitious, and being now anxiously defirous of knowing some future Events, caused his Diviners to offer many Sacrifices; and while they were fearching for the usual Indications in the Entrails, and the Emperor present, some Christian Courtiers near him made the Sign of the Cross on their Foreheads, which immediately frighted away the Dæmons, and put all into The Augurs were also in Disorder, not a Confusion. being able to discern the wonted Tokens; and, as if they had failed in some little Ceremony, began anew, and often repeated them, but to no Effect. Whereupon Tages Master of these Ceremonies, either seeing the Persons, or suspecting them, cry'd out, That the Reason why the Sacrifices had not their usual Effects, was, because some profane Persons had thrust themselves into the Assembly, and mixed with the holy Solemnities. The Emperor enrag'd at this Disappointment, commanded all present to do Sacrifice, and all his Attendants upon pain of Scourging; and by a Warrant to the Commanders, order'd all the Soldiers in the Army to do the same, or immediately to be disbanded. This may be call'd the Beginning of the Persecution, tho' it reach'd not to Capital Punishments. and no further than the Soldiery; in which many honourable and profitable Posts in the Army were abandon'd by the Christians, who chose to forsake all rather than renounce the Worship of the true God. This was still inconfiderable as to the whole Body of the Christians; and Ensebius tells us, that their Multitudes at this Time terrify'd their Enemies, and kept them from proclaiming open War against them all. Maximian also shew'd great Severity to the Christian Soldiers, condemning them to the most fervile Offices; and it was by their Hands and Labours that he raised those immense Structures of the Baths of Diocletian at Rome, the Baths of his own Name at Carthage and

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A. D. In the Time of these Buildings, great Advantages were obtain'd against the Northern barbarous Nations, in which Diocl. Wars young Constantine, the Son of Constantine, nobly fignaliz'd his Youth by many brave Exploits; particularly he took the Sarmatian General Prisoner, and brought him

alive to Galerius.

A. D.

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About this Time there appear'd an emment Pagan call'd Arnobius, who being awaken'd with the Calls of Heaven, as well as the Lives of the Christians, presented himself before the Bishop of his City, and desired to be admitted among the Faithful. His City was Sicca in Numidia, where having been a publick Professor of Rhetorick, and a Pagan of no ordinary Abilities, he was at first refus'd, till he had given fome fignal Evidence of the Reality of his Conversion. Hereupon he set himself to vindicate the Cause of Christianity against the Gentiles, which he did in feven Books, 'wherein he vigorously afferted the Truth ' and Excellency of the Christian Religion, dexteroully and wittily exposed the Foilies of all Pagan Worthip, and triumphantly baffled all the specious and popular lnfinuations. But being but a Catechumen and a new "Convert, he wrote not without some Errors, and shew'd himself better skill'd in discovering the Weaknesses of Poganism, than proving the sublime Truths of Chri-' stianity. But by this Work he removed all possibility of Jealousie and Suspicion, and was joyfully entertain'd and receiv'd to Baptism; becoming ever after a strenuous Defender of the Christians. About the Time of the Conversion of Arnobius, dy'd Cyrillus Bishop of Antioch, after he had held that Dignity about eighteen Years, and was fucceeded by Tyrannus, who continu'd in this See about thirteen Years, and was the 19th Bishop of Antioch after the Apostles. In the following Year, and towards the Conclusion of this Century, dy'd Theonas Bishop of Alexandria, after he had held that Dignity about nineteen Years, and was succeeded by Peter, a wife and eminent Governor, who continu'd in the See near twelve Years, and was the 16th Bishop of Alexandria after the Evangelist St. Mark.

And thus we have given an Account of the main Acts of the Christian Church through the three first Ages of it, and the wonderful and amazing Conquest that this Religion obtain dover the greatest Powers of Hell and Darkness. Insomuch that the Christians at this Time had

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without Arms overspread the Face of the Earth; and were also so numerous, that the present Emperors dared not openly to attack them, till they had first cleared their Armies of them, and regulated their Soldiers for that Purpose. And here it may not be improper to speak a Word or two of what contributed to this stupendous Progress and Encrease; which besides the Hand of God, and the miraculous Powers in the Church, feem to have been thefe five Things. First, the real and intrinsick Excellency of the Religion it felf, which taught the most rational, and noble, and fublime Precepts: Secondly, the great Learning and Abilities of many of its Champions, who bravely defended it against all Domestick, as well as Foreign Enemies: Thirdly, the indefatigable Zeal and Industry used in the Propagation of it; in which they thought no Hazards too great, no Difficulties insuperable, no Nations too remote, to enlarge the Bounds of the Gospel: Fourthly, the incomparable Lives of its Professors, which caus'd both the Envy and Admiration of its Enemies. Fifthly, their unparallell'd Patience and inviolable Constancy under Sufferings, in which they became doubly triumphant more than Conquerors: And as the Roman Emperors tri-

umph'd over the World, they triumph'd over the Empe-

rors, and incontestibly shewed that they were guided and

supported by an invincible and omnipotent Power.

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We are now arrived at the fourth Century of the A. D. Christian Church, the Beginning of which was attended with the most terrible Storm and Conflict, that ever was Diocl, known, and with no less glorious Conquest and Triumph; fo that Christianity first vanquish'd all human Powers, and then oblig'd them to be real Protectors. But be- Enfeb. fore this noble Advantage, God thought fit to permit fuch a furious Wind, as should purge all the Rubbish from his Church, and winnow all its Chaff. The Christians, with tome inconfiderable Interruptions, had now enjoyed forty Years Peace and Prosperity, from the End of Valerian's Persecution; in which Space they encreas'd to an extraordinary Degree, filled the Imperial Palaces, and obtain'd the best Offices in the State; to that, as Enfebius observes, it is impossible to describe the vast Assemblies, the numerous Congregations, and the Multitudes that throng'd in every City to embrace the Faith of Christ. For which Reason they were no longer satisfied with the old Edifiges, but erected spacious Churches from the very Foun-

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dations, throughout all Cities in the Empire. This unufual Liberty, as it put the Christians less upon their Guard, began by Degrees to be turned into Licentiousness, which produced many other Corruptions: Some began to envy and revile others, and were in a Manner at Wars among themselves, wounding each other with Affronts and Calumnies; Prelates strove against Prelates, and one Congregation rais'd Factions against another. When these Things became too open and scandalous, the divine Vengeance began first to visit them with a moderate and gentle Hand, and only permitted Loss and Disgrace to fall upon those Brethren who bore Arms. But this proved not a sufficient Warning; but regardless of all Punishments, they added Impieties to Impieties; and many Paflors and Governors, rejecting the Sanctions of Religion, were inflam'd with mutual Contentions, studying nothing more than promoting of Diffentions and Violence, making of Schisms and Separations, and greedily challenging to themselves the Preeminence of others, as if it were earthly Dominion. When the first Visitation, mild and affectionate, would not reach the Hearts of an insensible People, God thought fit to fend a fecond more strong and effectual; and when the Ulcer began to putrifie, it was time to call for the Knife and the Caustick.

Athan. Epiph.

Among the Schisms at this Time, the most remarkable was that of Meletius Bishop of Lycopolis of Thebais in Agypt, who being convicted of many Crimes, and amongst others, of facrificing to Idols, was depos'd in a Synod by Peter, Bishop of Alexandria. Miletius made no Appeal to any other Council, nor endeavour'd to recant or acknowledge his Errors, either to Peter or his Successor; but made a new Schism in the Church, and separated from Peter and the other Bishops, against whom he publish'd many Calumnies, to cover the Shame of his Deprivation, and particularly that they were guilty of too much Indulgence towards enormous Sinners and Apostates. He began his Schism in this Year 301, as Montagi proves; and continu'd a long time, with many Followers, call'd Meletians.

A. D. One of the most violent Promoters of the succeeding Persecution, was Hierocles the Philosopher, successively Diocl. President of Bithynia, and Governor of Alexandria; a Person who not only wrote against the Christian Religion, and pretended to find many Inconsistences in the Scriptastant, tures, but also had the Considence to equal the Miracles

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of Apollonias Tyaneus to those of our bleffed Saviour. But none shew'd himself a more effectual Promoter of this Persecution than Galerius himself, to which he was excited not only by his own Cruelty and Superstition, but in a particular Manner by his own Mother, who was a most zealous Pagan, and had entertain'd an insuperable Prejudice against the Christians, who frequently shew'd a Detestation of her Religious Rites. Wherefore to gratifie her Resentments, as well as his own, he repair'd to Nicomedia, and us'd all Methods to engage old Diocletian to proceed in what he had formerly begun, and to ruin the Christians entirely. He had many Confultations with him during a whole Winter, and while it was believ'd abroad that they were treating about State-Affairs, they were only projecting a new Persecution. Diocletian loving his Ease, cou'd not willingly hearken to new and violent Councils, but shew'd Galerius How dangerous it was to disquiet the Empire with so much Confusion and Bloodshed; which must needs be vastly great, since the Christians were so ready at all times to lay down their Lives; therefore he judg'd it sufficient to purge the Court and the Army from Men of that Religion. Finding this would not fatisfie the furious Galerius, he betook himself to his old King-craft, which was to refolve upon all commendable Actions. without taking Advice, that the Honour might redound to himself alone; but to take Council in hazardous Matters, that the Blame might fall upon others, Therefore he declar'd he wou'd hear the Opinion of his Friends and Confidents; and accordingly some Judges and Military Commanders were admitted to Council; amongst whom, fome declar'd the Christians Enemies to God, and therefore ought to be destroy'd; and others, out of Complaifance, were too ready to affent to what Galerias should please to determine. All which did not satisfie Diocletian, who to do all Things compleatly, fent to confult the Oracle of Apollo Miletius; from whence receiving an Anfwer as from a true Enemy to Christianity, he yielded, as tho' he had receiv'd his Directions from Heaven: Yet still he mov'd for Moderation, that it might be done without Blood, while Galerius infilted that the Christians might be burnt alive. The last Thing determin'd, was to fix upon a proper and auspicious Day for the Beginning this great Work, which at length was determin'd to be the 23d Day of the next February, when the Terminalia were usually celebrated among the Komans; and this was chosen as a happy

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happy Omen, that they shou'd put a Term and Period to the Christian Religion. This was resolv'd in Winter, in the latter End of the Year 302, or the Beginning of the following, 303.

CHAP. VIII.

From the Beginning of the tenth great Perfecution of the Church, to the first Establishment of Christianity by Human Laws under the Emperor Constantine the Great.

Containing the Space of about 10 Years.

The TENTH GENERAL PERSECUTION.

A. D. 303. Diocl. 19 20. Lastant. Enseb.

LL Things being thus establish'd between the Emperor and his Cafar, in the 19th Year and - 8th Confulship of Diocletian, and upon the 23d Day of February, the tenth and last general Persecution began in the City of Nicomedia. In the Morning of which fatal Day, the Prefect of the City, accompany'd with some Officers, repair'd to the Church of the Christians, and having forc'd open the Doors, fought for the Image of the God they worshipp'd; but finding none, took the Sacred Books, and other Things they found, and threw them into the Fire, filling all Places with Force and Violence. This was done in the View of Diocletian and Galerius, who held some Debate whether Fire should be set to the Church, but the former over-rul'd that, as being of dangerous Consequence to the City; whereupon Officers were employ'd who in a few Hours levell'd that lofty Building with the Ground. In the following Day an Edict was let up, commanding all Christian Churches to be demolish'd, and the Scriptures to be burnt; that all Christians should be incapable of any Honours and Offices; that no Rank and Dignity should exempt them from Torture, and that they should be out of the Protection of the Law, and have no Power to right and vindicate themselves by Suit. Upon the Publication of this Edict, a certain Christian took the Liberty both to tear it down, and to rally the Emperors;

Chap. VIII. DIOCLETIAN the 39th Rom. Emp. 665

rors; who being immediately feiz'd, after he had endur'd all forts of Torments with admirable Patience, he was burnt alive. This Edict was succeeded by another, which commanded all the Prelates of the Church to be put in Bonds, and all imaginable Methods to be used to compel them to facrifice. Yet the Severity of these Edicts did not satisfie the barbarous Galerius, who, to push on Diocletian to the utmost Extremity, secretly caus'd the Imperial Palace to be fet on Fire; and this not fufficiently moving the wary Diocletian, he repeated the Fact, and charg'd all upon the Christians, making Report, That they had conspired with the Eunuchs to murder the Emperors, and that they had been in great danger of being both burnt with the Palace. This drove Diocletian beyond all the Restraints of Reason, and in a Fury resolv'd to compel all Persons to facrifice, beginning with his Daughter Valeria, and his Empress Prisca. He put several of the Eunuchs, and Courtiers of the greatest Credit to Death, particularly Dorotheus, Gorganius and Peter; which last couragiously endured all the Tortures of Scourgings, Gridirons and Fires. Several Presbyters and Deacons were feiz'd on, and without Proof, condemn'd and executed; and also Anthimus Bishop of Nicomedia, was beheaded, with whom was join'd a great Number of Martyrs. No Regard was to Age, Sex, or Order, and not contented with fingle Executions, whole Houses full were burnt at once, and Droves ty'd together with Ropes, were thrown into the Sea, with Milstones about their Necks. Nor was the Persecution coufin'd to Nicomedia; for the Judges were fent to all Temples to force People to facrifice; the Prisons were every crowded, and unheard of Tortures invented; and that none but Pagans might have the Benefit of the Law, they plac'd Altars in the very Courts of Judicature, where every Person was oblig'd to offer Sacrifice before he could plead: So that Men came before their Judges as before their Gods. New Edicts were daily sent into other Cities and Provinces; so that in a short Time the Persecution spread through most of the Empire, and became almost universal.

This dreadful Persecution continu'd for the Space of Engel. ten Years under Diocletian and his Successors; but for Lastant. most of that Time in the Eastern Parts of the Empire, where, as Enfebius intimates, the Corruptions of the Chrihians were greatest. At first it was more universal, and carry'd on with fuch Violence and Severity, that Diocletian and his Colleague vainly thought they had compleated

their Work; and accordingly they told the World in some Inscriptions, That they had utterly defaced the Name, and Superstition of the Christians, and had restored and propagated the Worship of the Gods. It is impossible to enumerate the vast Multitudes of Martyrs in all Parts, or to set forth the infinite Variety of their Miseries and Torments; for, as Lactantius observes, a hundred Tongues, and the loudest Voice were insufficient for such a Labour. Deaths were innumerable, and exceeded all former Relations: Some were beheaded, as in Arabia; some devour'd by wild Beasts, as in Phoenicia; others slain by breaking their Legs, as in Cappadocia; some were hung up with their Heads downwards, and suffocated by flow Fires, as in Mesopotamia; and others were broil'd upon Gridirons, as in Syria. In Pontus some had sharp Reeds thrust up under all their Nails, and others had melted Lead poured upon their naked Skins, which ran down and burnt the most necessary Parts of their Body; while others without any Commiseration, endur'd obscene Tortures unfit to be related, which the impious Judges us'd as a Demonstration of the Acuteness of their Wit, as if the Greatness of that consisted in the most unnatural Inventions. In Ægypt infinite Numbers of Men, Women and Children fuffer'd various kinds of Deaths; some of whom, after their Flesh had been torn off with torturing Irons, after they had been rack'd, most cruelly scourg'd, and sustain'd Torments of different Sorts, and horrible to be heard, were committed to the Fire, and others drown'd in the Sea. Other fome chearfully offer'd their Necks to the Executioners; some dy'd under their Tortures; others perish'd with Hunger. Again, others were crucify'd, some according to the ordinary Manner of Malefactors, and others after a more cruel manner, being nailed with their Heads downwards, and left to die by Famine. But the Torments and Indignities which the Martyrs sustain'd in the Province of Thebais, surpass all Relation; who with sharp Shells instead of torturing Irons, were torn all over their Bodies 'till they expir'd. Women were ty'd by one of their Feet, and by certain Engines hoised up into the Air with their Heads downwards; and their Bodies being entirely naked, were made a most detestable, and inhuman Spectacle. Others were ty'd by the Feet to great Boughs of Trees, violently, wrested and forc'd together by Machines, which being let go, in a Moment rent the Bodies of the Martyrs all in Pieces. All which was not for a few Days, or short Time,

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but continu'd for the Space of whole Years; fometimes no more than ten, at other times above twenty were destroy'd; sometimes not less than thirty, ar others near fixty; and again at another time a hundred Men together. with very small Children and Women, were executed in one Day, being condemn'd to various and interchangeable Kinds of Punishments. In Phrygia the Soldiers invested a populous City, consisting all of Christians; and setting Fire to it, Men, Women and Children, while calling up-

on God, were all consum'd in the Flames.

Great Numbers of Prelates, Bishops and Clergymen, Enfeb. fuffer'd in this Persecution, far too many to be nam'd; &c. 'till at length fome of the Governors of Provinces, weary'd with Slaughters, and fatiated with the vast Effusion of Blood, pretended to shew Tokens of Clemency and Humanity, declaring, It was unfit to pollute the Cities with the Blood of the Inhabitants, and to defame the mild Government of the Emperors with the Deaths of so many Subjects. Therefore they thought it sufficient to discourage the Christians, by making them miserable in this Life, and fetting Marks of Infamy upon them. Accordingly, some had their Ears, Nofes and Hands cut off, and others their Eyes put out, and one of their Legs disabled. Eusebins fays, it is impossible to reckon up the innumerable Multitudes of the Christians who had their right Eyes put out and fear'd with a hot Iron, and of those who had their left Legs made useless by torturing Instruments: After which they were condemned to the Mines, not so much for the Service they could do, as upon the Account of the Miseries they should endure. All kinds of Arts were made use of to eradicate Christianity, and establish Paganism; and particularly the greatest Care was taken to destroy the holy Scriptures, but all in vain. All the Time, the Christians gave strange and noble Instances of the most undaunted Bravery; they throng'd to the Tribunals of their Judges, and freely declar'd their Opinions and Religion, despised the Threatnings and Barbarity of their Enemies, and receiv'd their last Sentences with a pleasing Smile. Yet some of them were not free from unwarrantable Practices; and as some prest too forwards to Death and Torments, so others leap'd off the Tops of Houses to avoid the Malice of their Enemies; and some Ladies in Antioch drown'd themselves to escape being ravish'd by the Soldiers. Others were far more culpable, and out of Fear deliver'd up their Bibles; and too many, to avoid Torments,

Torments, apostatiz'd. But far the greatest Part of the Christians behav'd themselves so manfully, that neither Fears nor Charms could fasten upon them, at once giving undeniable Evidences both of their own Fortitude, and of the irrefistible Power of our Lord that went along with them. Among whom we ought to mention Donatus, to whom Lactantius writ his Account of this Persecution, who was tormented nine feveral Times by three different Governors; by Flaccinus, by Hierocles, and by his Succesfor Priscillian. In all these Cruelties the Emperor Maximian willingly join'd with Diocletian and Galerius; fo that these three wild Beasts exercis'd their Barbarities upon all the Provinces from the East to the West. Only Gaul was free, where the good and mild Constantius govern'd; but being urg'd by his Superiors, he made a flight Pretence of pulling down some of the Christians Churches, without any further Damage. Once he politickly pretended to profecute them, and commanded all the Officers of his Houshold to join in the Pagan Sacrifices, or immediately to leave their Places; but when some of them did so, he sent them away with great Difgrace, generously declaring, That those Men who were not true to their God, would never be faithful to their Prince.

Lattant. Victor. Mc.

During these dismal Transactions, the Emperor Diocletian finding these Affairs to succeed according to his Defire, refolv'd to repair to Rome, from whence he had been absent many Years, there to celebrate his Vicennalia, or twentieth Year of his Reign, and also to triumph for all his former Conquests and Victories. All this was perform'd upon the 20th Day of November with great Solemnity, being accompany'd with his Colleague Maximian, and the two Cafars, Constantius and Galerius. In this Triumph was expos'd an infinite Mass of Treasure of the Spoils of the East, of Ægypt, and several Countries by them subdu'd. There were many Chariots full of Arms, and Vesfels of Gold and Silver, and many renown'd Prisoners, particularly the Wife and Children of the King of Persia, with many Kings and Commanders of the Alanes, the Catti, and other Nations. As foon as all these Solemnities were over, Diocletian, who was always haughty and imperious, shew'd how little he cou'd bear those Marks of Liberty that the Romans still retain'd; at which he became fo uneafie, that tho' the first of January was near, in which he was to enter upon his ninth Consulship, yet he cou'd not be prevail'd on to stay 'till that Day at Rome, but he

Chap. VIII. DIOCLETIAN the 39th Rom. Emp. 669

began his Confulship at Ravenna. This Winter was both A. D. extreamly cold and rainy; so that the Journey did so affect his Health, that it threw him into a lingring Sickness, Diocl. and brought him into a low and uncomfortable Condition, which detain'd him in Italy the whole Summer. But tho' he was almost incapacitated from acting himself, his Lieutenants, and more especially Galerius, carry'd on the Persecution, particularly in Palestine, where Eusebin himfelf refided, and was an Eye-witness of infinite Barbarities. In the first Year of the Persecution, he takes notice of the Martyrdoms of Procopius, Alphans, and Zaccheus in Cafarea, and of Romanus in Antioch; who with great Glory conquer'd the Malice of their Persecutors. In the fecond Year the Perfecution in those Parts became more violent and sharp, and became memorable for the triumphant Deaths of Timotheus at Gaza, Timolaus, Dionyfius, Romulus, Agapius, and several others at Casarea. In Rome Pope Marcellinus suffer'd upon the 24th Day of October, after he had held the Dignity of Bishop eight Years, seven Months and fourteen Days. In this Time of Persecution there was a Vacancy in the Church of above three Years.

In the mean Time Diocletian was brought very low by Lattant his Sickness, and being carry'd in a Litter, arriv'd at Nicomedia in the latter End of the Year; where upon the 13th of December he fell into so deep a Swoon, that all despair'd of his Life. Yet he escap'd this long Sickness, but never regain'd such entire Perfection of Health as former; for ever after this he had some Fits of Madness, which return'd upon him some particular Times, tho' in the Intervals he had his Understanding perfect. Not long after his first Appearance abroad, which was on March 1st, 305. Galerius came to him, not to congratulate his Recovery, but to compel him to refign the Empire. This violent ambitious Man had lately made the same attempt upon Maximian, threatening him with a civil War if he refus'd to refign; but began with Diocletian in a more gentle Manner, intimating, That since he was become aged, and less able to bear the Fatigues of Government, be ought to give himself some Repose, after so much Application and Toil, according to the Example of Nerva towards Trajan. Diocletian, uneasse at such a Proposal, alledg'd, That a Resignation was dishonourable to him who had born so sublime a Character, and unfafe for one who in so long a Reign must have created many Enemies; therefore Nerva's Case was very different from bis. But if to be of equal Dignity with

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with himself, would satisfie Galerius, he was willing to confor that Favour upon him. The other, who had form'd a Project of making himself sole Emperor, and finding this would not answer his End, pretended, That the Order which Diocletian had begun, of having two Emperors with Supream Power, and two Assistants to them with inferior Power ought ever to be maintain'd. And then he concluded more roughly, That if the Emperor would not retire, and make way for him, he would look to himself; for he would be no longer contented with his present Dignity. The old Man, now much broken and dispirited, having receiv'd Letters from Maximian, and heard that Galerius was augmenting his Forces, at length, with servile Tears confented to what he was unable to remedy. However Diocletian still endeavour'd to be concern'd in the Nomination of the two defign'd Cafars; but in that also Galerius over-rul'd, and appointed two Creatures of his own, call'd Severus and Maximinus, contrary to the Opinion of the other, both wicked and barbarous Persons, and agreeable to his own Disposition. All Things being thus concerted in fecret, on the first Day of May, this great Affair came to be declar'd; when the Soldiers were drawn up, old Diocletian, with Tears in his Eyes told the Men, That he was now become infirm; therefore he was resolved to rest himself after so much Labour, and to deliver up the Empire to those who were able to sustain the Burthen of it. accordingly he nominated the two new Cafars that Galerius had appointed, contrary to all Mens Expectations, who hop'd that young Constantine should have been one. After this Diocletian divested himself of his Imperial Robes; and, like a Soldier who had obtain'd his Difinission, retir'd; drove through Nicomedia, and so pass'd over to Salona in his own Country Dalmatia, where he return'd to his private State, and to his primitive Name Diocles. And thus the great Act of Refigning the Empire of the World, which fome Authors extol and applaud, appears from this Account out of Lastantins, to have been an Act of meer Necessity and Constraint. This was done upon the first Day of May, 305, under the fifth Consulfhips of Constantins and Galerius, Diocletian being now about 60 Years of Age, and having reign'd 20 Years, seven Months, and. 14 Days, from the Beginning of the Diocletian Æra. Maximian by Consent also resign'd his Authority the same Day at Milan, having reign'd with the Title of Augustus almost 19 Years. II. Upon

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. Upon the Refignation of Diocletian and Maximian, the Empire in course devolv'd upon the two Cafars, Confrantius and Galerius, Men as different in their Tem-Conpers and Dispositions, as in their Births and Educations. STAN-Wherefore, to prevent any future Disputes that might a- TIUS, rife from fuch a Disparity of Inclinations, they agreed to the 40th make a distinct and independent Division of the Empire Roman between them, which was the first Division of that kind; Emperor. for the' the Empire had often been govern'd by two Em. Victor. perors at one time, yet it was never independently divided Enfeb. before. Constantius had the Western Parts of the Empire, &c. namely, Italy, Sicily, the greatest Part of Africk, together with Spain, Gaul, Britain and Germany; and Galerius the Eastern and the largest Share, namely, Illyricum, Pannonia, Macedonia, Thrace, all the Provinces of Greece, and the leffer Afia, together with Ægypt, Syria, Palestine, and all the East. This Division being made, the Government of so many Provinces feem'd too great a Charge to the pacifick Temper of Constanting, who chusing rather to govern well than to govern much, freely relinquish'd the Provinces of Africk and Italy to Galerius, contenting himfelf with Gaul, Spain, Britain, and his Part of Germany. Galerins, on the other side, finding the Affairs of the Empire difficult to manage with Security to himself, allotted the Government of Itaby and Africk to Severus, and the Government of Ægypt, Palestine, and the East, to Maximin; reserving to his own immediate Management, the Provinces belonging to Hlyricum, Greece, and Asia-Minor. So that the World was in a manner govern'd by four Heads, Constantius and Galerius independent Emperors, and Severus and Maximin. Cafars dependent upon Galerius. Constantius the first and senior Emperor, was about 54 Years of Age when he entred upon this Government, which he manag'd to the great Satisfaction and Approbation of all Men, preserving his Provinces from all kinds of Wars, Rebellions, and other Miseries, during his short Reign. The Ganls not only lov'd him, but almost ador'd him, before he was Emperor; for under his former Administration they had efcap'd the pernicious Policy of Diocletian, and the bloody Temerity of Maximian. His principal Aim was to encrease the Happiness and Riches of his Subjects, it being his declar'd Opinion, That it was better for a Prince to have his Nations Wealth diffused, and in the Hands of many, than to be lock'd up in his own Coffers; concurring

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with Trajan, who compar'd the Exchequer to the Spleen, the great Growth of which hinder'd the whole Body's Nourishment. He so little affected Pomp and Splendor, that on Festival Entertainments, he generally borrow'd Furniture and Plate from other Persons for the Use of his Table. And being in his former Administration reproach'd for his Poverty by Diocletian's Ambassadors, he only intimated his Wants to the People, and in a few Hours amass'd such infinite Sums from their voluntary Contributions, as altonish'd these Strangers; while he inform'd them, That the Love of the People was the surest Treasure of the Prince, and that his Subjects Mony was by that Means always at his Devotion, which he never thought Safer than when they were Keepers of it. After the Ambassadors Departure, he returned all the Subfidies that were presented him; being by his voluntary Poverty, richer than Diocletian and the other Princes who were his Partners. was of an affable, brave and generous Temper, and not only the Christians, but likewise all that were subject to him, were extreamly happy under his excellent Government.

Lactant. Enfeb.

On the other fide, those Provinces under the Care of Galerius, were miserably harrass'd, and oppress'd by the Infolencies and Extortions of that Tyrant; who continually loaded his Subjects with fuch Taxes and Impositions, and us'd fuch barbarous Methods in collecting them, that the State of Affairs look'd as dismal as if the Empire had been over-run by Foreign Enemies. All Places were full of Grief and Fear, all Mens Fields were measur'd, an Account was taken of all their Trees, and Vines, and their Cattle; upon the slightest Suspicions of Concealment, Men were scourg'd and tortur'd; Children were hung up in Sight of their Parents; Slaves were oblig'd to accuse their Masters, and Wives their Husbands. None but Beggars were exempted from these Oppressions; but this impious Man us'd other Methods with them, gave Orders to gather them all together, to put them into Veffels and drown them in the Sea; by which Means he found an effectual Expedient to keep all Men from making Poverty an Excuse for not paying of Taxes. His inhuman Practices also extended to Men of the highest Rank, who were put to many cruel and ignominious Deaths, fuch as Crucifixion, and throwing to wild Beafts; for Beheading was accounted an extraordinary Favour. As for the Christians, for whom he had the greatest Ha-

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Chap. VIII. CONSTANT. the 40th Rom. Emp. 673

tred, he not only condemn'd them to Tortures, but to be burnt in flow Fires, after this horrible Manner; They were first chain'd to a Post, then a gentle Fire set to the Soles of their Feet, which contracted the Callus of the Foot till it fell all off from the Bones; then Flambeaux just extinguish'd were clapt to all the Parts of their Bodies, so that they might be tortur'd all over; and Care was taken to keep them alive by throwing cold Water in their Faces, and giving them some to wash their Mouths, lest the Extremity of the Anguish should dry up their Throats and choak them. Thus their Miseries were lengthned out whole Days, 'till at last, their Skin being quite consum'd, and they just ready to expire, they were thrown into a great Fire, and had their Bodies burnt to Ashes; after which their Bones were ground to Powder, and thrown into some River. At the same Time, in the East the Persecution was carried on with fresh Rage and Cruelty by the bloody Maxmin, who at his entring upon his Government, isu'd out Orders to quicken the Governors of Provinces in putting the Laws in strict Execution against those who refus'd to comply with the pulick Rites and Ceremonies of the Empire. To which purpole, while Officers were making Proclamation at Cæfarea, and fummoning Men by Name out of a publick Roll, Apphianus a young Gentleman of Lycia, then Scholar to Eusebius, pressing through the Crowds, caught hold on the Hand of Urbanus the Governor, forc'd him to let fall his Sacrifice. and gravely reproved him for those Impieties. Whereupon he was immediately apprehended, put to the severest Torments imaginable, and thrown half dead into the Sea; his Brother Adefius for the same Fact suffering the same kind of Martyrdom, and almost at the same time at Alexandria, not to mention innumerable others who gloriously ended their Lives.

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Thus were the Christians severely treated by Galerius Enfet. and Maximin; but the Persecution in Italy, Spain, Africk, St. Ang. and those Parts, ceased about the time of Maximian's Refignation, after it had continu'd about two Years. now the Church obtaining some Rest in the Western Parts, the Bishops and Clergy began to meet in several Places, to confult about the Case of such as had lapsed in the Persecution, and of those call'd Traditores, such as had deliver'd up the Bibles, and confecrated Vessels belonging to the Church. And in this Year we read of two Councils or Synods, one at Cirtha in Africk, and the other at VOL. II

In the mean Time the good Emperor Confunius, in the second Year of his Reign, repair'd to Britain, and residing at Eboracum, or Tork, and there falling into some Sickness, he began to be extreamly concern'd for the Safety of his Son Constantine, who for several Years had been kept at the Court of Discletian, as an honourable Pledge

too remiss an Easiness. It is believ'd, that about this

Time Peter depos'd Meletius Bishop of Lycopolis, of whom

Enfeb. Lattant. Zofim.

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for his Father's Fidelity; and fince his Relignation, in that of Galerius in the East. Galerius hated Constantius and was jealous of his Son, whom he wou'd often have remov'd by a violent Death, but he knew that the Army admir'd Constantine, and wou'd revenge it. He sought therefore under pretence of Games and Martial Exercises to have dispatch'd him, but all in vain; for as the Hand of God was visible in protecting him so long, so it appear'd most fignally now in the last and critical Moment. His Father had often fent for him, and had been as often deny'd; and particularly in this present Siekness he had renew'd his Importunity: So that Galerius being asham'd to deny this reasonable Request, sign'd him a Pass to take with him the next Day, resolving upon some Artifice to stop him in his Journey, and prevent his Arrival in Britain, and therefore order'd him to come the next Morning to receive his final Instructions. But Constantine having some Apprehension of his Designs, as soon as Galerius had retir'd to his Rest, took Post-Horses with all Speed, and at every Stage where he arriv'd, besides those sew he us'd himself, he ham-string'd all the Horses he left behind him. Galerius, on Purpose to delay him, did not open his Doors 'till Noon; and then calling for him, and understanding that he was gone the Night before, he immediately commanded several Men to pursue him; but hearing soon after that the Post-Horses were all disabl'd, he burst into a violent Passion of Rage and Vexation. In the mean Time Constantine travell'd with the utmost Expedition; and arriving at York, he found his Father weak, and past Recovery. Constantius at the Sight of his Son, in a fort of a Rapture leapt out of his Bed, and receiv'd him with all the Marks of Joy and Paternal Affection, gave him feveral useful Instructions and Directions, and particularly recommended the poor Christians to his Care and Pity. Being demanded which of his Children shou'd succeed him, he having two Sons by Theodora; neglecting his fecond Wife and her Progeny, he cry'd aloud, None but the pious Constantine! and shortly after expir'd in the Arms of this beloved Son. Thus dy'd Constantius, a Prince of admirable Virtues and Accomplishments, and infinitely belov'd and lamented by all his Subjects. He dy'd on the 25th Day of July, in his own Consulhip with Galerius, being in the 16th Year of his Age, and having reign'd only one Year, one Month, and 25 Days from the Resignation of Abal's olderwood to Tan Diocletian

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Diocletian and Maximian; but above 13 Years under the Title of Casar, before he was Emperor.

A. D. 306. CON-STAN-TINE the 41st Roman Emperor. Euseb. Lactant.

Laclant.

. The excellent Constantius being dead, his Son Con. stantine proceeded to celebrate his Obsequies; which he did with all imaginable Pomp and Splendor. All Persons honour'd that bleffed Emperor with Praifes and Acclamations, and unanimously agreed, That the Succession of the Son in the Empire was a Resurrection of the deceas'd Father; and forthwith they faluted him Emperor of the West, with the highest Marks of Joy and Satisfaction. E. very Man's Eyes were fixt upon this Prince; his tall and comely Personage, the Strength and Firmness of his Body, but especially the Virtues and Endowments of his Mind, gave an early Presage of the future Happiness of his Reign. He was a Prince of a noble and vigorous Spirit, of profound Policy and Capacity, and of no less Modesty than Magnanimity; and a Prince, whom God of his Bounty rais'd up to perform wonderful Things for his Servants. He was now about 32 Years of Age, and according to the most receiv'd Opinion, he was a Native of Britain, which has been confirm'd by several others; but Mon: Pagi and some others seem'd to have made it appear, that he was born in Naissius in Dacia, now call'd Nissa, a Town in Servia. His Parentage was very noble by his Father's Side, as being descended from the Emperor Claudius II. and he, as it is believ'd, from the great Vespasian; but his Mother Helen was a Woman of inferior Quality, of Drepano into Bithynia; but yet a good Christian. This, no doubt, contributed to his future Conversion; and the first Ordinance he made after his Advancement, was to give the Christians the free Liberty of their Religion. Constantine for a considerable Time contented himself

with the Name of Cæsar, and not immediately assumed the Title of Augustus or Emperor, expecting that the Senior Emperor shou'd have fent him that Title, but in vain: For as soon as his Image, wreath'd with the Imperial Laurel, was presented to Galerius, he was so transported with Rage, as to condemn both it, and the Messenger to the Fire; but was disswaded from the Execution by his Friends, who were sensible of the Mischies of exasperating an already disleas'd Army. Therefore, that he might seem

to allow that voluntarily, which he wanted Power to prevent, he sent the Purple to Constantine; but withal proceeded to a new Contrivance, which was to create Sentence.

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rus Emperor and Augustus, as being the elder Man, and Constantine only Casar in Partnership with Maximin; so that instead of being next to himself, he might be the last of the four. But Constantine stood in no need of his Approbation to confirm his Title to the Empire; his Father's declar'd Will for his Succession, and the universal Confent both of the Army and the whole West, put his Right beyond all Dispute. His Image, according to the Custom of new Emperors, being expos'd in Rome, immediately provok'd the Ambition of Maxentius; and taking an Opportunity in the Absence of Severus, whose Government the Pratorian Soldiers hated, he proclaim'd himself Emperor by their Assistance, and some considerable Officers then in Rome, upon the 27th Day of October. He was Son to old Maximian by Entropia, an ordinary Woman of Syria, and Son-in-law to Galerius; and was very popular among the Soldiers, whom for Recompence he allow'd to commit intolerable Outrages and Disorders in the City. was some Surprize to Constantine, but a greater to Galerius, who with all speed sent Severus to suppress him, with an Army that had formerly ferv'd under Maximian, and order'd him to march directly to Rome, knowing that those Soldiers who had tasted the Pleasures of that Place, wou'd endeavour both to preserve the City, and to make it their Head Quarters. Maxentius beginning to reflect upon the Boldness of his Attempt, and the approaching Danger, to strengthen his Interest, sent the Purple to his Father Maximian, who had liv'd in Campania ever fince his Refignation of the Empire; and declar'd him now Emperor a second time. Maximian, who had resign'd his Dominions against his Inclinations, and was longing for a Change in the State of Affairs, accepted of it with great Satisfaction. In the mean Time Severus march'd with his Army, and in the following Year arriv'd at the very Walls of A. D. Rome; but his Soldiers confidering against whom they were to fight, immediately abandon'd him; so that he was Const. constrain'd to fly, and to shut himself up with a Handful of Men in Ravenna, to avoid old Maximian who had now re-assum'd the Empire, and was marching that Way. Finding that he cou'd not avoid being deliver'd up, he at length relign'd his Imperial Purple; but this Submission cou'd only purchase him an easie Death, which was by opening his Veins; which happen'd a little before the Month of April.

Lastant. Eufeb.

Lattant.

Victor.

Maximian well knew the furious. Temper of Galerius, and fearing that he might join with Maximin, and revenge this Defeat, fortify'd Rome; and having fetled the principal Affairs, he march'd into Gaul, and to strengthen his Interest, married his youngest Daughter Fausta to Constantine, about the Month of May. In the mean Time Galeriss gather'd together all his Troops, and in a great Rage march'd into Italy against Maxentius, fully resolving to ruin all the Inhabitants of Rome, and particularly to deftroy the whole Body of the Senate. But he was foon stopt in his furious Career; for his own Soldiers, upon their near Approach to Rome, confidering the Confequence of this unnatural War, began to desert, and were in a very flaggering Condition. This threw him into fuch a terrible Fright, that fearing the late Fate of Severus, he cast himself at his Soldiers Feet, and servilely begg'd, That they would not deliver bim up to his Enemies; and then march'd back with fuch Fear and Consternation, that a small Body of Men wou'd have been sufficient to have ruin'd him. Infinite Ravages and Outrages were permitted by him, and committed by his Army in all Parts of Italy in their March; so that instead of being a Roman Emperor, he became the Plunderer of Italy, retiring back into his own Part and Division, after he had in a savage Manner destroy'd the whole Country. Maxentius, who at first made some Shew of Piety and Compassion to the Case of the Christians, after this Success, became more infolent both towards them, and his other Subjects; abandoning himself to the most sensual Vices, and the most horrid and impure Actions; which in a short time brought him to the most oppressive Acts of Cruelty and Tyranny. And to compleat his Character, he afterwards added the detellable Arts of Magick, and other infernal Delufions; in the Exercise of which he became one of the most intolerable Oppressors that Rome ever knew. By the Assiflance of his Army he maintain'd himself in his Usurpation, and kept Rome and Italy fix Years; but he foon lost Africk to another Usurper nam'd Alexander, who set up for Emperor, and continu'd four Years under that Title.

In the mean Time the restless Maximian made use of all Methods to regain his former Dignity and Authority, who, the had a Share with his Son Maxentius, was no ways satisfy'd with it; but at his Return to Rome he endeavour'd to ruin him; and rais'd such Confusions and Mischiess among the Pratorian Soldiers, that he caus'd

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Chap. VIII. CONSTAN. &c. the 41th Rom. Emp. 679

himself to be driven out of Rome, almost as ignominiously as Tarquin had been of old. From hence he repair'd to Galerius, then at Carnuntum, knowing him to be his Son's inveterate Enemy. He pretended he came to concert with him some Things relating to the publick Good; but in Reality he hop'd under this Pretence of Reconciliation, to find Means to destroy him, and possess himself of his Share of the Empire, fince he was now thrust out of his own. Galerius was at this Time bufily employ'd in creating of an Emperor in the Room of Severus deceas'd; and this was Licinius a particular Friend of his, originally the Son of a poor Labourer in Dacia, but a very politick and experienc'd Commander; and to give the greater Authority to the Choice, old Diocletian was sent for, and was prefent at the Solemnity. Maximian was very urgent with his old Partner to re-assume the Empire; but nothing cou'd move Diocletian, who made Answer, If he could see the Quiet be enjoy'd at Salona, and the Cabbages be had planted with his own Hands, he would be sensible that he was not to be tempted to so great a Trouble. Licinius was created in the Month of November, and tho' he had the Concurrence of Diocletian, yet Maximin in the East refented it extreamly, and wou'd neither be contented any longer with the Title of Cafar, nor allow Licinius the Precedence: Upon which Galerius sent many Messengers to induce him to fubmit to this Order; but Maximin wou'd neither yield to his Entreaties, nor his Commands. Galerius finding nothing wou'd prevail, refolv'd to put an End to this second Rank of Dignity, and so extinguish the Title of Cafar; therefore, as he declar'd himself and Licinius the proper Emperors, so he gave to Maxentius and Constantine the Title of Sons of Emperors, and quite excluded Maximin. But hearing shortly after that Maximin had boldly assum'd the Title of Augustus, he also gave the same Title to Constantine and Maxentius.

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Maximin having made himself Emperor of the East, Engel, and having a powerful Army, soon discover'd himself in Ladlant, his proper Colours, and shew'd that he was a thorow-pac'd Tyrant; as well in Respect to his Subjects in general, as to the Christians in particular. In all Respects he nearly resembled Maxentius at Rome, and even surpass'd him in Impieties. He was vastly timorous and superstitious, and an extraordinary Favourer of the Impostors about Idols and Damons; and he presum'd not to stir or act in any Affair without Divinations and Responses of T 4

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Oracles; fo that Magicians and Inchanters were by him promoted to the highest Places of Honour. Upon which Account, he us'd his utmost Endeavours to revive declining Paganism, and impos'd a more severe and cruel Perfecution upon the Christians than the former Emperors had done. In the preceding Year, and fourth of the Persecution, he went to Cafarea and Palestine, there to celebrate his Birth-Day in December, which was done with great Variety of Paganish Shews and Spectacles. But all had been nothing, if the Christians had not born a share in the Triumphs of that Day. Accordingly Agapius, who had been before sentenc'd to the wild Beasts, was brought forth into the Amphitheatre, and being invincible to all Perfwasions, was deliver'd over to the Mercy of a She-Bear, who only left him so much Life, as to be able to survive 'till the next Day, when with Stones ty'd to his Feet, he was thrown into the Sea. Not long after, in the fifth and present Year of the Persecution, Eusebius's dear Friend Pamphilus was apprehended, and brought before Urbanus the President, who endeavour'd to turn him by all the Arts of Infinuation and Terror; but all in vain. The Martyr remain'd immoveable, and generously despis'd his Threatnings, which so enrag'd the Governor, that he commanded him to be put to the acutest Tortures; and when they had more than once rak'd his Sides, and torn off his Flesh with Iron Pincers, he was fent to keep Company with the other Confessors in Prison, the Governor himself being immediately after difgracefully turn'd out of his Office, and with Shame enough condemn'd to Death by the Emperor. But not all the Misery and Torment Pamphilus endur'd, cou'd fright Eusebius from his Friend: He visited him in Prison, and diligently affished him in his Occasions, and during his two Years Imprisonment they mutually employ'd their Time to great and useful Purposes. And as formerly they had publish'd the Greek Translation of the Septuagint, taken out of Origen's Hexapla, for the Use of the Palestine Churches; so now they composed an elaborate Apology in Defence of Origen, to vindicate him from those rude Censures and Reflections, which the hasty and indifcreet Zeal of some had cast upon his Memory. About this Time Marcellus a Roman, and Son of Benedict, was made Bishop of Rome on the 18th Day of February, after a Vacancy in the See of three Years, three Months, and twenty five Days. He held this Dignity one Year and

A. D. 308. Conft.

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Chap. VIII. CONSTAN. &c. the 41th Rom. Emp. 681

almost eight Months, and was the 29th Bishop of Rome

after the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul.

The impatient Maximian still finding his Projects fruit- Lastane. less, withdrew himself again into Gaul, with Designs no less wicked than the former; for tho' both Constantine and his Father had married two of his Daughters, he plotted against his Life; and in order to effect it, laid aside his Imperial Habit. The Franks were then in Arms; so that Constantine was oblig'd to march against them; but his Father-in-law perswaded him that Part of his Army would be sufficient for that War; all with a Design to have the rest of his Army in his own Power, and that Constantine for want of Soldiers might be overwhelm'd by the Franks. He was easily perswaded by one, whose long Experience gave Authority to his Advices; so after a few Days, when Maximian believ'd his Son-in-law was engag'd among the Barbarians, he again assum'd the Purple, brake in upon the publick Treasury, distributed large Sums among the Soldiers, and gave out false Reports concerning Constantine. But all was soon turn'd against him; for Constantine receiving Notice of his Actions, return'd with incredible Expedition, fo that Maximian was furpriz'd in his new Usurpation, and also abandon'd by the Soldiery, upon which he fled to Marseilles, and shut himself up there. Constantine soon follow'd him, and invested the Place; and having demanded a Personal Conference from the Walls, he calmly ask'd him, What he himself had done, and what could push on Maximian to act so indecently as he had done? The other answering him very scurrilously, those about him set open the Gates to Constantine's Soldiers; so that this rebellious Emperor, and treacherous Father-in-law, was now in Constantine's Power, who satisfy'd himself with laying his Crimes before him, and reprimanding him, stript him of his Imperial Purple; but carried his Resentments no further, leaving him both his Life, and his Liberty.

This was the fixth Year of the Persecution, which was Engl. still carried on with the most imaginable Fury by Maxi- &c. min in the East, who issu'd out new Edicts in every Province, commanding that all the decay'd Idol Temples shou'd be immediately repair'd; That all Persons, Men, Women, Servants, and young Children, should be compell'd to do Sacrifice, and by all Methods forc'd to eat Part of the Flesh that had been offer'd; and that all Provisions expos'd to Sale in the Markets shou'd be defil'd with such Things

as had been facrific'd. These Things encreas'd the Trou-

dull'd,

bles and Miseries of the Christians, which prov'd so vast and prodigious, that many of the Gentiles themselves cou'd but condemn the Barbarities of the Emperor, and many of his Officers. Eusebins has given a particular Account of the intollerable Cruelties practis'd in Palestine by the Governor Firmilian, who succeeded Urbanus; and of the Martyrdoms of two famous Virgins Valentina and Thea, with Paul, Antoninus, Zebina, Germanus, and many others; for which, he affures us, the Stones and senseless Matter miraculously wept, to reprove the barbarous and unmerciful Disposition of Men. In the following Year, which was the seventh of the Perfecution, his dear Friend Pamphilis, who had been two Years a Prisoner, was brought forth with his Companions. The Judge knowing Pamphilus to be of an invincible Constancy and Resolution, only ask'd, Whether he would yet comply; and having receiv'd both from him, and his Companions a flat Denial, Sentence of Death was past upon them. But between Sentence and Execution, Pamphilus's Servant Porphyrius interpos'd, a young Man of good Parts and Learning not above eighteen Years of Age, who boldly requested that the Bodies of the Dead might receive decent Burial. But he paid dear for his forward Zeal, the Tormenters being commanded to exercise all their Faculties upon him, who rak'd off his Flesh 'till they had laid bare the most inward Recesses of his Body, all which he endur'd with incomparable Patience; after which, being order'd to be burnt in a flow Fire, he fuck'd in the Flames at a Distance, entertaining his Friends in the Midst of his Torments with a most serene undisturb'd Mind, 'till his Soul mounted up, leading his Mafter the Way to Heaven, who shortly after follow'd him with his Companions. But the Rage of their Enemies dy'd not with them, the Governor commanding their Dead Bodies to be kept by a military Guard four Days, that they might remain a Prey to wild Beafts; but when neither Birds por Beafts came near to touch them, they were permitted to be decently interr'd. Enfebins thus depriv'd of his dear Companion, withdrew himself from Cafarea, and retir'd into Agypt, where he found the Perfecution fo far from abating, that it encreased together with the Heat of the Climate, especially in the

Parts about Theban, where he tells us, he daily beheld the most dismal and deplorable Spectacles, and such Numbers executed, that the very Edges of the Pagan Swords were

A. D. 309. Conft.

Chap. VIII. CONSTAN. &c. the 41st Rom. Emp. 683

dull'd, and the Tormenters themselves, tho' relieving one another, tir'd out. All which Time they discover'd not only the highest Constancy, but the most impatient Defire of Martyrdom, Sentence being no fooner past upon the first, but others immediately crowded up to the Tribunal. confessing themselves Christians. During his Residence in these Parts, Eusebius was seiz'd and thrown into Prison; but how long he remain'd there, or by what means he was

deliver'd thence, we have no certain Account.

Tho' in the Western Parts of the Empire the Christians had Peace, yet Rome was not exempt, which sufficiently felt the Cruelties of the Tyrant Maxentius, who not only opprest the Christians, but also condemn'd Marcellus Bishop of Rome to keep Beasts in a Stable, and then banish'd him on October the 7th, after he had held this Bishoprick one Year, seven Months, and twenty Days. After a Vacancy of about seven Mouths, about April in the following Year 310, he was succeeded by Eusebius the Son of a Grecian Physician, who suffer'd under this Tyrant about four or five Months after, and was the 30th Bishop of Rome after the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. After his Death there was a Vacancy in the See of Rome of above nine Months.

IV. The Persecution having continued about seven or eight Years, God thought fit to abate it in the middle A. D. Parts of the Empire, as it had been before in the West; and as he had chastized his Servants, he began now to Const. punish the great Persecutors with untimely and miserable Deaths. These Persecutors were Diocletian, Maximian, Galerius, Maximin and Maxentius; who were all Enemies to Morality, as well as Christianity. The first that Lastant, fell was the wicked Maximian, who having lost the Dignity of an Emperor, and the Regard due to a Son-in-law, proceeded to new Conspiracies against Constantine, and endeavour'd to corrupt his own Daughter Fausta to murther her Husband; all which being discover'd by her, and all his impious Designs detected, Constantine could not fafely allow him any greater Mercy than to permit him to chuse his own Death, which Lactantius tells us, was Hanging: A Death sufficiently ignominious for one who had govern'd the Roman Empire near twenty Years with great Glory and Reputation. But the Hand of Heaven was more visible and fignal in the Punishment of that grand Promoter of the Persecution Galerius, who in the Midst of his vast and nefarious Projects, was visited by an incu-

rable and intolerable Disease. It began with an Impostume and Ulcer bred in his fecret Parts, and a Fistula in Ano, which spread after an unheard of Manner, and entred into his inmost Bowels; and tho' the Cancer encreased flowly and gradually, yet it puzled all the Arts of the most excellent Physicians and Surgeons. And while all human Means became ineffectual, Recourse was had to the Pagan Gods, and Prayers were made to Afficulapius and Apollo for his Recovery; and fome Relief was pretended to have come from the latter. But he grew still worse and worse, and his Death seemed very near; for the Ulcer had confumed all the Bottom of his Belly, his Bowels were laid open, and daily rotting, and his Buttocks were over-run with Putrefaction. Some bold, but unhap-py Physicians, would not desist; and tho' they had no Hopes of Success, yet they still tried new Remedies; which drove the Evil inwards, even through his Bones to the very Marrow, so that Worms began to breed within The Stench that came from him was so noysome, that it was perceiv'd, not only over all the Palace, but in the very City likewise; and the Passages of his Urine and Excrements were now mixt, all the Membranes being corroded that separated them. He was devour'd by Vermin, and the whole Mass of his Body was turn'd into an universal Rottenness. Some living Creatures, and others that were boiled, were applied to the putrefied Parts, to try if the Heat would draw out the Vermine; and this indeed opened a vast Hive of them; yet a second Impostumation discovered a more prodigious Swarm, so that his Bowels feemed to dissolve all into Worms. A Dropfie join'd to all these Ills, did monstrously disfigure his Body: All the upper Parts were quite exhausted, and dried like a meer Skeleton cover'd with a dead Skin; but at the fame time all his lower Parts were swelled up like Bladders; so that the Shape of his Feet was scarce to be perceiv'd. With all these he had insupportable Pains and Torments, greater than he had inflicted upon the Christians, which caused him frequently to bellow out like a wounded Bull; and he often endeavour'd to kill himself, and caused several of his Physicians to be slain, because their Medicines were ineffectual.

A. D. 311.

In all this dreadful Mifery, Galerius languish'd a full Coust. Year; when at length his Conscience was awaken'd, and he was forc'd to give Praise, and make Confession to the Supream God: So that in the Intervals of his Torments,

Lastant. Enjeb.

he often cried out, That he would re-build the Church of Nicomedia, and that he would repair the Mischiefs he had done to the Christians. Being in his last Agonies, and having confulted Constantine and Licinius, he publish'd this following Edict in his and their Names. Among our other Cares for the Advantage of the Publick, one was to reduce all to the Observation of the ancient Laws and constant Discipline of the Romans; and particularly to oblige the Christians, who had for saken the Religion of their Fathers, to return to a better Mind. Having observed that they, moved by their own Reasons, had been guilty of a stiff and obstinate Abandoning the Sanctions of their Ancestors; and that according to their different Humours, they were framing new Laws, by which they might govern themselves, and were falling into Divisions, and forming separate Assemblies. Upon which we issu'd out our Edicts, obliging them to re turn back to their first Institutions, which had good Effects upon many; but still great Numbers continu'd firm to their Rules; and as on one side they did not offer a due Worship to the Gods, so on the other side they did not adore the God of the Christians. We therefore having Regard to all these Things, and being mov'd by our Princely Compassion, ana our constant Clemency towards all Men, have thought fit to extend this our Grace and Indulgence even to the Christians: And therefore we do not only allow them to continue in their Religion, but permit them to hold Assemblies for their Worship; provided they act nothing contrary to their establish'a Discipline. In a particular Rescript we will signifie our Pleasure to our Judges for their Direction. In the mean Time we expect that the Christians, in return to this our Favour, shall supplicate their God for our Health, and the Prosperity of the Commonwealth; so that they may still hope to enjoy our Protection in their respective Habitations. This Edict was published in Nicomedia, in the last of April, where the Prison-Doors were set open, and Donatus, with many other Christians, set at Liberty. Yet all this did not avert the Judgments of God from Galerius; his Putrefaction encreas'd, 'till it quite wasted his whole Substance; so that a few Days after the Publication of his Edict he expired, having recommended his Wife and Son to Licinius, and put them into his Hands. This was the miferable End of that great Persecutor Galerius, after an impious Reign of a little above fix Years, fince the Refignation of Diocletian. At his Death he left the Empire divided among four; Constantine Emperor of Gaul, Spain, Britain

Britain and Germany; Licinius his Successor, Emperor of the Provinces of Illyricum, Greece, and Asia Minor; Maximin, Casar, but since called Emperor of Ægypt and the East; and Maxentius, Usurper, but since called Emperor of Italy and Africk, tho' the latter was possess by another Usurper named Alexander.

Laftant. Eufeb.

Upon the News of the Death of Galerius, the Tyrant Maximin in the East, us'd all possible Expedition to enlarge his own Dominions, and in a short time posses'd himself of Asia and Bithynia, which now belonged to Licinius. This Success so swell'd his Mind, that he became a more severe Oppressor of his Subjects and a more cruel Persecutor of the Christians than before. That he might restore declining Paganism, he commanded new Temples to be erected in every City, and others with all Diligence to be repair'd. He constituted great Numbers of Priests for the Idols, and over them he appointed a Chief-Priest for every Province; which were distinguish'd not only by their rich Habits, like the chief Officers of the Court, but also by a military Guard of a considerable Body of That Paganism might be universal, Maximin commanded all the Meat fold in Markets to be first offered to Idols, or to pass through some Rites of Idolatry, so that none could eat of it, without being in some Manner or other polluted with those Abominations. Besides, he proceeded to the Commission of all kinds of lewd and extravagant Actions, pillag'd his Provinces with unreasonable Taxes and Impositions, and became an insupportable Burthen to Persons of all Degrees and Professions. In all his impious Practices he succeeded according to his Wishes, only in those against the Christians he was daily defeated; for they continually despised his Fires and Swords, his Racks and Engines, his Tortures and wild Beasts; and whilst he endeavour'd to destroy the Sacred Scriptures, they retain'd them in their Souls, triumph'd and fung Hallelujah's out of them in the midst of the Flames. ther Christians, to whom he pretended to shew Mercy, had their Eyes bor'd out, and some their Hands, or Feet, or their Noses and Ears, cut off, as Marks of Infamy; which they look'd upon as Scars more honourable, than those of the greatest Commanders. Among the many that suffer'd Death, Lucian a renowned Presbyter of Antioch, was brought to Nicomedia, and having made an Apology for his Religion in the Presence of the Emperor, he was committed to Prison, and then executed. Many Bishops

Chap. VIII. CONSTAN. &c. the 41th Rom. Emp. 687

Bishops in the East also suffer'd, among whom was the celebrated Peter Bishop of Alexandria, who was beheaded after he had gloriously perform'd the Duty of the See about eleven Years. Upon his Death there was a Vacancy in the Bishoprick for above a Year. In the same Year, after a Vacancy of about nine Months, Militades, or Melchiades, succeeded in the Bishoprick of Rome; he continued about two Years and an half in the See, and was the 31st Bishop of Rome after the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul.

In this Year Alexander, after four Years Usurpation of Africk, was fubdu'd, and the Province reduc'd to the Power of Maxentius at Rome. For a confiderable Space Africk, and the Western Parts of the Empire had been obtate. freed from Persecution; but now Disturbances of another Si. Aug. Nature began to arise in the Church of Carthage, which afterwards prov'd a vast Mischief to the Church in general. They began foon after the Death of Mensurius Bishop of Carthage, when several Persons desiring to succeed in his See, affembled the neighbouring Bishops to ordain a Bishop of Carthage, without citing thither the Bishops of Numidia, as had been usual in such Cases. The Design of these Persons did not succeed according to their Intentions; for not one of them was chosen Bishop, but another Person nam'd Cacilian, Arch-deacon of Carthage, who was ordain'd by Fælix Bishop of Aptungis. The Bishops of Numidia being offended at their being slighted. and not call'd to this Ordination, and being follicited by some Enemies of Cacilian, repair'd this Year to Carthage, to the Number of Seventy. They durst not enter into the Church where Cacilian had Possession; but being receiv'd by those who call'd them, they cited him to appear before them, and defend himself. This Bishop undauntedly reply'd, That if there were any Proofs against him, the Accuser might appear and produce them; but his Enemies having nothing personal to object against him, accus'd Falix who had ordain'd him, of being a Traditor in the late Perfecution, and therefore incapable of bestowing a valid Ordination upon him. Caecilian either mistrusting the Innocence of Falix, or unwilling to enter upon this Controversie, made Answer to his Enemies, That if Fælix had not conferr'd upon him Episcopal Orders, he submitted to be ordain'd by them a fecond Time. Upon which, Purpurius Bishop of Limata, a subtle Projector, advised those of his Party, to make a Shew of accepting this Proposition, and

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when Cacilian shou'd come to receive Ordination, instead of laying Hands on him, they should put him under the Centure of Penance; which Advice had been executed, had not Cacilian been detain'd by his Friends, who wou'd not fuffer him to trust himself to the Fury of his Enemies. Upon his not appearing, the Bishops of Numidia condemn'd him, and ordain'd Majorinus in his Room, alledging three Reasons for the Deprivation of Caecilian: First, because he refused to appear before the Council; Secondly, because he had been ordain'd by Traditors; and Thirdly, because being Arch-Deacon, say they, he had hinder'd the carrying Victuals to the Martyrs in Prison. After the Bishops had severally pronounc'd their Sentences against Cacilian, and ordain'd Majorinus Bishop of Carthage, they fent a Circular Letter to all the Bishops of Africa; exhorting them to separate themselves from the Communion of Cacilian. But not withflanding this Letter, and all their Endeavours, Gacilian continuid in his See, and in Communion with a great Part of the Bishops of Africa, and with all the other Bishops of the World; who looking upon the Proceedings against him as violent and unjust, declar'd themselves in his Favour, and against the Numidians, who had now made a Schismoin the Church. This was the Beginning of the famous Schism and Faction of the Donatiffs, which for a long time caus'd fuch great Diffurbances in the Church and over ton bloom from the Emperor's own Mouth, who publickly and

Enfeb.

A great Part of the Roman Empire now lay under intolerable Miseries and Afflictions, as Famines, Pestilences and fuch like Calamities; and likewife the horrid Cruelties and Oppressions of the two Tyrants Maximin in the East, and Maxentius in Rome. The Insolencies and Outrages of the latter came daily to the Ears of Constantine in Gaul, whom God had now defign'd for a glorious Deliverer, and a noble Triumpher in his Caufe. This great Man being folicited by an Embassy sent to him by the Se nate and People of Rome, took up a Resolution worthy of so generous a Mind, to march against Maxentius, and free the City from the Tyrannics and Extravagancies of that Usurper. Accordingly, having taken upon him the Title of Magnus, in the latter End of the Year 311, he entred Italy with an Army of about 90000 Foot and 8000 Horse; and in the following Year against all Opposition he advanc'd almost up to the Walls of Rome. Not long after his ingaging in this Expedition, like a good and pru-M 1 odent

A. D. 312. Const.

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dent Man, he began to confider of some Assistance beyond the meer Strength and Courage of his Forces; and knowing that there was great Variety of Deities at that Time ador'd in the World, his first Care was to learn which of these to fix upon, and implore as his Protector and tutelar Guardian. He observ'd the fatal Miscarriages of his Predecessors, who had violently stood up for the Multiplicity of Gods, had repos'd entire Confidence in their Affistance, and courted their Favour by all the formal and fond Rites of Worship; that notwithstanding their Zeal, their Wars had been generally unprosperous, and their Ends unfortunate and untimely: On the contrary, That his Father had acknowledg'd and ador'd one only God, and him the supreme Governor of the World, who had wonderfully prosper'd his Undertakings, and given him many illustrious Instances of a Divine Power and Goodness, through the whole Series of his Life. These Confiderations made him resolve to lay aside the vulgar Deities, by which the World had been so long impos'd upon, and to adhere only to the God of his Father; to whom therefore he humbly addrest himself, beseeching him to make himself known to him, and to effectually affist him in this Expedition. And Heaven heard his Prayer, and answer'd it in a Manner so surprising and miraculous, that Eusebius, who relates the History, acknowledges, that it would not have been credible, if he had not receiv'd it from the Emperor's own Mouth, who publickly and folemnly ratify'd the Truth of it with his Oath. The Army being near Rome, and the Emperor imploy'd in these devout Ejaculations, near the 27th Day of October, and the Sun declining about three a-clock in the Afternoon, there fuddenly appear'd a Pillar of Light in the Heavens in the Fashion of a Cross, with this plain Inscription on, or about it, TOTTO NIKA, In this overcome. Constantine was not a little furpriz'd at this strange Spectacle, as also were the whole Army that beheld it; and the Officers and Commanders, prompted by the Augurs and Aruspices, look'd upon it as an inauspicious Omen, portending an unfortunate Expedition. The Emperor himself knew not what use to make of it, 'till at Night our blessed Saviour appear'd to him in a Vision with the Cross in his Hand, which he had shew'd him the Day before, commanding him to make a Royal Standard like that which he had seen in the Heavens, and cause it to be continually carry'd before him in Wars, as an Enfign both of Victory and Safety. Vor. II. Early

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Early in the next Morning, Constantine informed his Friends what had hapned, and fending immediately for Workmen, fate down by them, and described to them the Form of the Standard, which he commanded them to make with the most exquisite Art and Magnificence; and accordingly they made it after this manner: A long Spear plated over with Gold, with a traverse Piece at the Top a little oblique, in the Fashion of a Cross; to which Cross-piece was fastned a four-square Curtain of Purple, embroider'd and befet with Gold and precious Stones, which reflected a most amazing Lustre, and towards the Top of it were pictur'd the Emperor in the Midft of his two Sons. On the Top of the Shaft above the Cross stood a Crown overlaid with Gold and Jewels, within which was placed the facred Symbol, namely the two first Letters of Chris's Name in Greek, X and P, the one being struck through the other thus This Device he afterwards wore in his Shields, as not only appears from Eufebing but also from the Coins extant at this Day. This Imperial Standard in all his Wars was carry'd before him; and in Imitation of this he caus'd Banners, which they call'd Labara, to be made for the reft of this Anny which were continu'd by his Christian Successors, tho not always in the exact Form. The Pagan Writers make no express Mention of the Famous Apparition of the Cross as it is natural to expect from them. But they confess and acknowledge, that it was a current and uncontradicted Report in the Mouths of all that before this Emperor's great Engagement, an Army in the Air was feen to come down from Heaven, Persons of great Strength and Stature, with vigorous and chearful Looks, and bright faming Armour, who were heard to fay, We feek for Comfantine, we are come to affift bim; as the Heathen Orator affires us in that very Oration, wherein he congratulated the Victory. Conflantine had an extraordinary Ouriofity to be further in-Monteted in these Divine Significations; and therefore calling for some Christian Bishops, demanded of them, Who this God was, and what was means by this Signed They inform'd him That the Perfor who bad done thin was the south begotten Son of the only true Godo the Sign that appeared to bim, was the Symbol of Immortality, and the Troophy rof that Victory which this Gud, i white the was upon n Earths had vigamed over Death of After twilich, they lexplain'd to him the Reasons of his coming down from Heaven, others:

Chap WIII. CONSTAN Sec. the 41st Rom. Emp. 691

Heaven, and the State of his Incarnation, and undertaking the Cause of lost Mankind. He heard their Discourses with fingular Pleasure and Satisfaction, but kept himself upon the Referve, like a wary and politick Man, not yielding too much at first: He often compar'd the Heavenly Vision, with what they had discoursed to him upon that Argument, and the more he did so, the greater Satisfaction he receiv'd; not doubting but that in due time God would more perfectly discover these Things to him; in order to which he resolv'd at leisure Hours to peruse the Holy Scriptures. But in this he kept his Thoughts to himself, till he might with all Safety declare them pub-

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Furnish'd with these pious Resolutions, Constantine pro- Enfet. geeded with all the Skill and Courage of an excellent Ladant. Commander. In the mean Time Maxentius in Rome had abandon'd himself to Ease and Luxury, as well as Charms and Inchantments, dividing his Hours between Pleafure and Superstition. He never went out of the Walls of the City, and feldom out of the Palace; to extreamly idle and unactive that to remove into the Saluftian Gardens, tho to empy a fresh Scene of Pleasure, was accounted a Journey and an Expedition, as a certain Orator justly reflects upon him. But Constantine now approaching, he faw that he must of necessity leave the City, and meet him; and therefore he plied the Altary with various Sacrifices, and commanded the Sibylline Oracles to be fearch'd; from which the Answer brought him, was, That that Day the great Enemy of Rome should perish; all which he undentood of Constantine, and apply'd the Success to himfelf, and the rather because it was then his Birth-Day. Thus putting all Things in the best Posture, he quitted the City and came out against Constantine with a far more numerous Army, confifting of 170000 Foot and 18000 Horse a great Part of whom being Romans and Italians, and having to feverely felt of his Tyranny, defir'd nothing more than to fee him fall at his Enemies Feet. However, the Engagement was fierce and bloody, 'till Victory having hover'd for some Space, rested on Constantine's side; for the knemy's Cavalry being routed, the whole Army fled, and hoping to escape the neatest Way by a Bridge of Boats which Maxentin had built over the Tyber, and had contrived it with fecret Springs and Engines to drown Constantine if he pass'd that Way, were caught in their own Snare, and fell into the Pit they had digged for Heaven

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others: Hon the Engines giving way, the Boats parted, and over prefly with the Weight of the Company, ginhe to the Bottom of the River, and Maxentius himself valous, with them, whose Body being found, this Head was tricken off, and carry divininphantly upon a Pole Before the Army. And this was the deserved End of an impious Hyrant and bloody Persecutor, after he had ultired and possessed a great Part of the Roman Empire for la little above fix Years.

Euseb. Lattant.

to be Bail

Constantine having obtain'd this compleat Victory, made a triumphant Entry into the City, being met by the Senate, Nobility, and infinite Throngs of Peoples whose chearful Faces, and loud Acclamations fufficiently testify'd the Sense they had of their great Deliverance, bublickly Stiling him Their Saviour, Reheemen, and Author of their Happiness. But Constantine would attribute nothing to his own Power and Policy hour allito the Bounty of Heaven; therefore the first Thing he did, was to fet up a flanding Monument of his Gratitude to that God, by whose Affishance he had gain'd the Wictory, I which the did by erecting a Statue to him in the most conspicuous Part of the City, holding in his Hand ablong Spear inv Form of a Gross with the same Inscription he had seem in the Heavens, and alfo another Infeription in the Balis, intimating of That under the Influence of that victorious Crofiq be had delivered the City of Rome from the Toke sof Ty rannical Power and had restored to the Senate land Heable their auctent Splendor and Glory. Several other Mov numents with Inscriptions were erected for him; of which Remains are Itill to be found among the Antiquities of Rome, particularly at the Foot of Mount Palatine, & this umphal Arch, whereon this great Deliverance istacknowledg'd to have been wrought by the Impulse and Affiffance of God, as well as the Courage and Puillance of Confiantine. From this Year began that noted Airo; of Period of Time call'd The INDICTION; and about this Fime, we are adured that Confrantine commanded by spublick Edict, that no Man for the future hould fuffer the Death of the Gross which till now was donk'd appay as the manti ignominious of all others. Having Bretled Affairs at Rome, and endear'd himself to all forts all Persons and thew himself grateful for the Benefits helreceiv'do the gradually and more openly declar diffinitely for the Christians; and this Year he and his Colleague Licinius published the first Law in favour of them, and sent at Copy of it to Maximin

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CHIPWIH. CONSTAN &c. the 410 Rom. Emp. 692

Maximis in the East, declaring their miraculous Progress, and expecting that he should follow their Example: This made Maximin extreamly uneafie, who being neither willing to grant, non yet daring enough to deny their Defires. Supprest their Edict, and directed a Rescript to Sabinus. Setting fouth the Care and Pains his Predecessors Dio-"detian and Maximian had used to secure their Religion against the Incroachments of Christianity; that at his coming last Year to Nicomedia, he had been sollicited both there and in other Places, that no Christian might be suffered to inhabit their City: However, his Pleasure was that the Governors of Provinces should use no Severity against the Christians; but treat them with all Mildness and Moderation, and try by fuch Methods to greducerthem to the Worship of the Gods, which if any would hearken to be though be most readily received; but if they had rather perfilt in their sown Religion, they affould be left to their own Freedom This Rescript, ascit was extorted; for it was so straightened, that it lost most of diss Effectors The Christians knew the Zeal and Fierceness of this Man's Temper too well to wrute him, no Brovision being made in it for their Churches, but onlyla general Indemnity from Trouble prohey durft neither build Churches; nor hold publicle Affemblies mor for the prefent faiely profess themselves Constiant but kept upon their Guards waiting for a more fit and favourable Scason. In these Times the See of Alexandria being vacant formewhat above a Year, Achillus was made Bishop of the Place, who held this Dignity not above five Months before he diedesindrimas succeeded in the Year 313 by the celebrat ted Alexander, who worthily fill'd the See about 7 Years, andowns the apphi Billiop of Alexandria after the Evange edged to have been wrought his the Impulse and Mischiel

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and the mean finte Conftantine daily proceeded in his Enfeb. Kindnesses to the Christians, received their Bishops with all due Honour and Respect, taking them with him in his fournies, cand often entertaining them at his own Table. All which the Pagans beheld with an envious and malignant Eye cas what portended the fatal Declention, if not the final A Destruction of their Religion. This was no small Concern to Maximin in the East, or even to old Diockturn, who lived long enough to fee all his former great and deep Designs blasted and rumed But what most nearhy affected him, was Confrantine's Orders to pull down all the leveral Pictures and Statues of old Maximian. Now U 3 Maximin Diocle-

694 Cent. IV. Ecclefiaftical Higtory. Blok III.

Discletion's Statues and his being always coupled together, the Differace of the one drew that of the other after it. Disclerion Teeing this Affront put upon his Statues, which no Emperor before him had ever feen in his own Time, and being overprest with a Load of Grief and Guilt, he refolved to put an End to his Unquietness wiThe Hand of Heaven began now to be visibly upon him; forthat he was in a perpetual Uneafiness; and could neither eat nor fleep; but was heard to figh and groan continually, and was often feen in Tears, sometimes tumbling on the Bed, and other times on the Ground. Thus he who had govern'd the World, with no small Reputation, above twenty Years, was now to dejected, dispirited and mortify'd, that he dy'd partly of Hunger, and partly through Anguish and Madness. This hapned on the 2d Day of December 212. above feven Wears after his Refignation of the Empire, breamings; but neither the wid do reak will be and in the original but and but hal, till Time and Want of Succours oblig d them

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8. Enseb. Latiant. Zosim.

Thus prosperous was the State of Christianity, and now nothing obstructed its Progress and full Possesfion of the World, but the Power of Maximum in the East, Constantine to carry on the great Work sthougheit convenight to friengthen his Alliance with Limintur, and to give him his Sifter Configuration in Marriage: and baying fetled the Affairs of Rome the departed for Milan in the Beginning of this Years where the Nuptials were dolemnized of In this City in the Month of March, the two Emperors iffu'd out feveral Laws and Edicks in favour of the Christians to restore them to their former Estates, to grant them new Privileges, to exempt the Clergy from all Civil and Secular Offices, which had hitherto been a severe Oppreffion to them, with many other Advantages of the like Nature. These Things were a dreadful Mortification to the Gentiles, who were still more confirm d in their Fears and Apprehensions, when they faw that Constantine neglected the Celebration of the Grand Secular Games, which according to the usual Course, were to have been solemniz'd this Year. These Games were wont to be kept for three Days and Nights with uncommon Magnificence and Devotion, with numerous and pompous Sacrifices, peculiar and appropriated Hymns, and a long Dealn sof other Paganific Ceremonies. Therefore the Emperor's Neglect of these solemn Acts occasion dua severe Sensure from the Gentilet who not only look'd upon it as an Argument of his Avertion to their Religion, but exclaimed against it as perninear

Chap WHI CONSTAN. & the 41th Rom. Emp. 695

pernicious to the State, and that which drew down the Vengeance of the Gods upon it. be showed to expend to a

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In the mean Time Maximin accounting it a Dishonour Lastans. to be inferior to Constantine and Licinius, made all possible Preparations, and march'd with his Army out of Syria during the Winter Season; and having harrass'd his Army with long Marches, he arriv'd at Bithymia. The Seafon was fo fevere, and the Ways made fo deep by Snow and Rains, that partly with Cold and partly with hard Labour, he lost all or most of his Horse; so that where-ever he march'd, he might have been trac'd by them; which was a very ill Omen to his Men. Nor did he stop within his own Limits, but having crofs'd the Straits at Thrace, he fat down before Byzantium; where being a Garrison belonging to Libinius, he study'd first to corrupt the Soldiers by Presents and Promises, and then to terrific them by Threatnings; but neither the one nor the other were effedual, 'till Time and Want of Succours oblig'd them to furrender: From thence he advanc'd to Heraclia and Perinthus, where he understood that Licinius was coming down to oppose him, and was got as far as Adrianople. Livinius had drawn together what Forces his thort I ime would permit and march'd towards Maximum with Defight rather to flop his Progress, than to engage in any Adion infor as the did not intende to fight, so he had no Prospect of Mictory, since he had not now above 20000 Men, and Maximin was at the Head of an Army of 70000 Men While the two Armies were so near each other, that it was natural to expect a speedy Decision on the Enemy sv Sides Maximin made a Vow to Jupiter, That if he got the Victory; he would utterly extinguish the very Name of to Christian On the other Side, an Angel appear'd to Licinius in his Sleep, and order'd him to rife immediately, and join with his whole Army in calling upon the Great God, promising him an assur'd Victory upon his Performance. At the same time, he dreamt that after this he arofe, and that the Angel dictated to him the very Words he should use in his Prayer. As foon as he was awake the call defor one of his Secretaries, and order d him to write down the Words as following, "We pray to thee, O great God; we pray to thee, O holy God; we commit the Justice of our Caufe to thee; we commit our Lives to thee; we commit this our Empire to thee! It is by thee that we live; our Conquests and our Hapo

pinels proceed from thee! O thou great and good God,

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hear our Prayers we firetch out our Hands to thee: Hear his therefore, thou holy and great Godun Mahy Copies were immediately made of this Prayer which were fent about to all the Officers, and were required to make their Soldiers get it by heart. This highly rais'dothe Courage of the whole Army, who now look doupon the Victory as certain, fince it was foretold in the ahcommon Purple, having gather'd together, formanaMissaivib bna

Lastant. Maximin confiding in his Numbers and this Gods, re-

folv'd to give Battel before the first of Maga which was the Anniversary of his coming to the Empire, than he might celebrate that Day with greater Pomp; when he had defeated his Enemy. When Lieuwis heard that Maximin's Army was advencing, he likewife drew out his; fo that they were in View of each other. Upon their near Approach, Litimin's Men laid down their Shields and Headpieces upon the Ground, and with Hunds and Ever hited up to Heaven, offer d up that Prayer they had been tanght, the Emperor himself beginning, and the Officers and Soldiers following him in it; which was pronduct dubinloud, that the other Army heard the Sound of sit of the Prayer was three times repeated, which animated the Soldiers to the utmost Degree, and having put on their Helmers, and raken up their Shields fearten group eted the Enemy. The Two Emperors party da awhiley but Maximus provid hearken to no Proposals of Peace, despising Library and not doubting But his Allen would defert him, because We was washad virmore foaring of his Bounty than himfelf. of The Signals being given, Licinius, supported by a divine Assurance, began with Buttel with great Vigour, and the Enemy was loune-diately to diforder'd and confounded, that they would neither draw their Swords, nor throw their Dartso Maximin Thran about on all Sides, using all the Methods of Reriwa-In fon to procure Licinius's Soldiers to come over do him, but all in vain; for being severely prest upon, he was soon - soblig'd to retire himself. His Army fell before the other, without being able to make Resistance, and his vast Body of Men were mow'd down by a Handful on the other bide. "I They feen d to have forgot their Quality their Courage, and their former Exploits; and the Hand of Godowas vilutifishe in delivering them over to the Mercy of wheir Encminies has lifthey had come and the Field of he Execution,

will and hof for Battely This melancholy Sight cansid Maxi-

middle throw away his purple Robe, and Apidovthe Habit of left & Shave so having first the Mortification of studing one 6

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Half of his Army definey'd, and the other Half furrender'd. varied finite the Emperor had deferted his Soldiers, they regred notwasham'd of deferting his Interests - In a Night and an Davihergot a hundred and threefcore Miles to Nicomitalin's where having taken his Wife, and Sons, and fome few nof his Domelicks, he departed towards the East of the floor at Cappadocia, where he re-affum'd the Purple, having gather'd together some Soldiers, partly of his own Stragglers, and partly of some Troops of the Enflering Provinces, first est errored learned every or b' vior

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Licinius, after he had distributed a Part of his Army into Lastant, Quarters, cross'd the Straits, and with the rest of his Men went dver into Bythymia. When he enter'd into Nicomedia, he offer'd up publick Thanksgivings to God, by. whose Aid he had obtain'd this signal Victory. And on the lighth of Jaire, Constantine and he being in their third Consultibute published the same Edict at Nicomedia, as had been published at Milan a few Months before. This Edich was very much in favour of the Christians, and to confirm it bionew by verbal Instructions urg'd all Perfand to fee the Churches of the Christians restor'd to them. 1) And thus ended entirely the tenth and last General Persecution of the Churchy which from the Beginning of it. of Heb. 123 1303 that is from the Demolishing of the Church of Nicomedia to the Rebuilding of it, were ten Years and

ken to no Propotals of Peace, despiting at do Manon anot REW Maximin having return'd with Difgrace into his own Enfeb. Provinces, The first in a furious Passion destroy'd many Lattant. Priefts and Prophets belonging to those Gods he ador'd. of looking upon them as Betrayers and Impostors, fince they had engaged him in a destructive War. He now began to be sinfensible of the Power of the God of the Christians, and by way of Expiation iffuld out a Decree, much more favourable than mbis former, swherein he allow'd the Rebuilding of their Churches, and order'd the Restoration of their Estates. still he fled before Liginius, and posselt himself of the narto row Passages of Mount Taurus, where he built Forts to ablander the March of his Enemy. Finding this ineffectual, sphercook and ampais to the Right Hand, and fled to Tarfiw; butybeing in Danger of being that up there both by Sea enand Hand, and Weing no Prospect of escaping, his fearful Moderations, and the Anguish of his Mind, made him affect for Death as the only Remedy against those Evils, ide Wiehlt which the Vengeance of Heaven had purfu'd him. ano Herfirst cat and drank to a great Excess, as was usual to

some who reckon it their last Meal, and then took Poison: but his Stomach being over-charg'd, that had no prefent Operation on him; but instead of dispatching him in a short time, it threw him into a lingring Torment, not unlike that of the Plague; by which his Life was far lengthned out, and made miserable to the utmost Degree. The Poifon now began to work violently upon him, and as an invisible Fire, gradually consum'd his Vitals, and his infufferable Pains threw him into a Phrensie to that for four Days time he eat Earth, which he dug up with his Hands, and fwallow'd greedly. This Fire wasted and melted away his Flesh, and the entire Shape and Figure of his former Beauty quite disappear'd. The Violence of his Pains became so intolerable, that he ran his Head against a Wall with fuch a Fury, that his Eyes flarted out of their Places. But as he lost the Sight of his Eyes, a Vision was represented to his Imagination, as standing to be jude'd by God, who feem'd to have Atmies of Ministers about him, all in splendid Garments; at the Sight of which he cry'd out as if he had been put on the Racks That is was others, and not bim; that were to blame! Yet afterwardshe confest his own Guilt, which was extorted from him by the exquisite Torments he fullain'd. He call'd inpost Felis Chrift, and with Floods of Tears begg'd that he would have lity on him: He ground and roard out with the Heat of his inward Flames, and having fully acknowledg'd, That these Sufferings were due for his Contempt and Presumption against Christ, he breath'd out his Soul in the most dreadful Manner imaginable. This happed in the Month of August, and was the pust Death of a bloody Tyrant, and barbarous Persecutor of the Church after he had reign'd in the East above eight Years. ebede I to not

The Death of Maximin put a Period to all the Troubles of the Christians; and this was the great Epocha, when Christianity triumphantly got Rossellion of the Thrones of Princes, and to its own native Power obtain'd the additional Strength of Human Laws and Constitutions: In which State, the different Degrees of Success and Splender, it has ever fince continued. As to the real Manner, and the gradual Methods observed in this Establishment, those are out of the Compass of this Work; which we conceive has answered its Title and End, by shewing the State of Christianity will the first Establishment of it by

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Chronological Table

Both of the

Roman and Ecclesiastical Affairs:

THE MONT Death, with his The

Nativity of our Blessed Saviour, to the first Establishment of Christianity by Human Laws, under the Emperor Constantine the Great.

COLLECTED

From the Works of Cardinal Noris, Father Pagi, Mon. Tillemont, &c. Foreigners: From Archbishop Usher, Bishop Pearson, Mr. Dodwell, &c. Englishmen; and from the Information of one of the greatest Chronologers now living.

A. D. V.Æ.	Roman Emperars.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclefiastical Affairs.
umo.i	Augustus from the Death of Julius Ca- sar.	Angusus examins the State of the whole Roman Empire.	Jesus Christ born at Bethlehem on the 25th of December, under the Consulthips of Angustus and Sylla.
K.O	40 T	Augustus divides Patrifine among Herod's Sons into three diftinct Governments.	Our Lord circumuled Jan. 1st. Presented in the Temple Feb. 2d. He is adored by the Magi, and flies into Egypt. Herod massacres the Infants in Bethlehem, and dies a little be- fore the Passover.

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A.D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
	Augustus. 41 42		Our Lord returns from Egypt, and fettles at Nazareth in Ga- lilee.
	42 43	Angustus banishes his Daughter Julia.	
	43 44	An m ns opens the Temple of Ja- nus, which had been flut be- fore our Saviour's Birth.	
I	44 45		The vulgar Ara of our Saviour's Birth commences, A. M. 4004, U. C. 754.
2	45	Tiberius returns from Rhodes in July, after seven Years Stay.	
3	46	Cains Cafar makes Ariobarzanes King over the Armenians.	
4	47 48	Angusius adopts Tiberius June 27th. He refuses the Title of Lord. He compleats the Calendar.	St. John the Evangelist suppos'd to have been born this Year, a also St. Panl.
5	48	Angustus astablishes the Militia of the Empire.	
6	49	A great Famine in Rome.	Archeians banish'd, and his Do minions reduc'd to a Roma Province. Coponius the first Governor.
7	50	Germanicus manages the War with Dalmatia,	
8	51	The Dalmatian War hnish'd.	Our Lord, at twelve Years of Age disputes with the Doctors. Samaritans prophane the Temple
9	52	Angustus makes Laws against Ce- lebacy, Varus defeated in Germany, Augustus banishes Ovid.	ien maainers enky, lippainers
10	53.	Augustus fends Tiberins into Ger-	Ambivius made the fecond Gover- nor of Judag.
11	54 55	Tiberius carries on the Wars with the Germans.	English to
12	55	Tiberius finishes the German Wars, and is associated in the Empire with Angustus.	
13	56 57	Angustus makes his Will, and lays it up with the Vestal Virgins.	vernor of Judea.
14	57 HI. Tiberius.	Angustus finds 4137000 Citizens of Rome, Angustus dies at Nola, Angust 19th. TIBERIUS reigns 22 Years, 7 Months, and 7 Days.	



A.D	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
15	Tiberius.	Germaniene Wars in Germany. Tiberius restrains the Licentious- nels of the Players.	Valerius Gratus made the fourth Governor of Judaa. He deposes Annas, and successively sets up 1/hmael, Eleazer and Simon.
16	2 3	Germanicus, after great Successes, is recall'd from Germany. The Aftrologers are banish'd out of Italy.	
17	3	Germanicus triumphs, May 26th. Cappadocia reduo d to a Roman Province. Germanicus sent into the East.	The fews complain of the Taxes Tiberius refers them to Germanicus.
18	4 5	Germanicus reduces Comagena to 2 Roman Province.	
19	5	lity is punish'd with Banish- ment.	and banishes the latter out of
.9	6	Germanicus, being poison'd, dies towards the End of this Year.	Caiaphas made High-Priest by Gratus.
20.	6	The Death of Germanicus reveng'd upon Pife.	Gamaliel made Head of the San- hedrim, according to the Rab- bins.
21	7	Tiberius retires to Campania in the beginning of the Year.	The falle Acts of Jesus Christ publish'd in the 4th Century are dated from this Year.
22	8	Tiberius affociates his Son Drusus with the Tribunitian Power.	
23	9	Drujus poison'd, from which Time Tiberius became more tyrannical. The Players are banish'd out of Rome and Italy.	
24	10	Tacfarinas, after seven Years struggle, is defeated in Africk. Tiberius solemnizes his first Decennalia, August 19th.	
25	11		
26	12	Tiberius retires from Rome, and never returns.	Pontius Pilate made the fifth Governor of Judea. He creates great Disturbances to to the Jews.
27	13	Tiberius settles at Caprea. The Amphitheatre at Fidena falls and kills 20000 People, and wounds 30000 more.	Herod divorces his Wife, and marries Herodias, Wife to his
28	14		Joseph, Husband to the Virgin Mary, dies, according to the most receiv'd Opinion.

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A. D.	Roman Emperor	Roman Affairs.	Ecclefiaffical Affairs.
29	Tiberius.	Tiberius's Mother Livia dies. Agrippina, Widow to Germanicus, and her two Sons banish'd.	THE BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL, and of John Baptist's Preaching, in the Beginning of this, or the lar- ter End of the last Year, He has many Followers.
30	16	Sejanus is suspected by Tiberius. Paterculus finishes his History. Some believe that the Roman took away the Power of Life and Death from the Jews this Year.	after our Saviour's Baptism.
db 6		Limit of the second	bleman's Son in Galilee.
i in	17	October 17th. After the Death of Sejanus, Tiberius is more favourable to	THE SECOND PASSO- VER after our Saviour's Bap-
31	18	the Jews.	in May, John sends to Jesus from Prison, Jesus receives Mary Magdalene. He goes over into Trachonitis where the Inhabitants are frighted. He raises the Dead, and worke other Miracles at Capernaum.
	18	A Volume of the Sibyl's Books added to the rest. Tiberius, in the midst of his Plea- fures, cruel and miserable.	The Mission of the 12 Apostles in Jan. 5 John Baptist beheaded in Feb. The first Miracle of the Loaves. THE THIRD PASSOVER after our Saviour's Baptiss. April 14th, in which Pilate slays the Galileans. The lecond Miracle of the Loaves.
32	19	TO TELEVISION OF THE CHARLES AND THE CHARLES A	Peter's Confession of Christ. Jesus's Transsiguration. The Mission of the 70 Disciples. Jesus goes to the Feast of Tabernacles in Ottober. The Return of the 70 Disciples. Jesus goes to the Feast of Dedication in December.
33	19	complices of Sejanus.	THE GREAT YEAR. Jesus crosses Jordan. His last Journey to Jerusalem. He converts Zaccheus, and raises Lazarus from the Grave. His Kingly Entrance into Jerusalem, March 29th. THE FOURTH AND LAST PASSOVER, A-

A. D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
33	Tiberius.	5	pril 2d, which Jesus changes for the Eucharist. Jesus condemn'd, scourg'd and crucify'd, April 3d, Friday. His Resurrection, April 5th. He appears five Times the same Day, and several Times after. His Ascension, May 14th. Matthias chosen one of the Twelve The Essus of the Holy Ghost May 24th. The first Establishment of the Christian Church. Miracles wrought, &c.
34	20	Philip the Tetrarch being dead, his Dominions are by Tiberius united to Syria. The Confuls celebrate Tiberius's Vicennalia, and are condemn'd shortly after.	Tiberius proposes to deity Jesus. The seven Deacons chosen. James the Less made Bishop of Jerusalem. Stephen stoned, about the Passover. The Church first persecuted, and the Believers dispers'd into several Countries. Philip converts the Samaritans Peter and John confirms them Simon Magus the first Introduces of Heretie. Philip*converts the Eunuch of Ethiopia.
35	21	Tiberius makes Visellius Gover- nor of Syria, in the Room of Pomponius Flaccus,	Paul converted near Damascus. He retires to Arabia, where he continues two Years. Vitellius goes to Jerusalem at the Passover, restores the Priest's Vestments, deposes Caiaphas and sets up Jonathan.
36	22	A Phœnix faid to appear in this Year, or the Year 3.4. Rome afflicted by Inundations, &c.	The Samaritans deluded by an
37	IV. Caligula.	Tiberius dies at Misenum, on March 26th. CALIGULA reigns 3 Years, 10 Months, and 8 Days. Caligula disposes of several Governments.	Pilate banish d by Caligula to Vienna in Gaul. Marullus sent in his Room. Herod Agrippa advanc'd to be
38	2	Caligula impioufly affumes Divine Honours, and builds a Temple to himfelf.	

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A. D.	Roman Emperors	Roman Affairs.	Ecclefiastical Affairs.
39	Caligula.	Caligula abolishes the Memory of Augustus's Victories over Antony. He banishes his Sifters, and commits many Cruelties.	Peter suppos'd to have founded the Bishoprick of Antioch. He goes to Lydda and Joppa, where he cures Aneas, and raises Ta- bitha from the Dead.
40	3	Caligula, having made a ridiculous Expedition, returns to Rome in Triumph, August 31.	The Jews reduc'd to great Ex- tremities by Caligula. THE CALL OF THE GENTILES. Cornelius the first Gentile Con- vert.
41	4 V. Claudius.	Caligula slain by Chareas, on January 24th. CLAUDIUS reigns 13 Years, 8 Months, and 19 Days. He makes Agrippa King of all Palestine.	The Jews favour'd by Claudius. Agrippa makes Simon and Matthias High-Priests successively. Many Gentiles converted at An-
42	1 and	Marsus made Governor of Syria, who checks Agrippa, Camillus's Revolt and Death, A Famine in Rome.	Paul, after three Years Labours in Cilicia, &c. goes with Barnabas to Antioch. Peter failly suppos'd to have settled at Rome this Year.
43	3	Claudius abolishes feveral Feasts and Sacrifices. The Famine foretold by Agabus. Marsus affronts Agrippa. Claudius goes into Britain, in the End of this Year.	St. Mark's Gospel wrritten. Marfus makes Elionaus High- Priest
44	4	Claudius triumphs over the Britains. He makes Fadus the seventh Governor of Judaa. Helena relieves Jerusalem in the Famine.	Agrippa persecutes the Church. St. James the Great beheaded a little before the Passover
45	4	Claudius forbids erecting any Statue without the Senates Permission. Fadus with Longinus disturb the Jews.	Herod of Chalcis obtains Power over the Temple, and makes Josephus High-Priest. Theudas the Imposter defeated.
46	5	Thrace, formerly subject to Kings, reduc'd to a Roman Province.	Paul and Barnabas go to Antioch
47	6	The Grand SECULAR GAMES celebrated by Claudius, April 21st, in the 800th	Paul and Barnabas, after three Years Circuit, return to An-

A. D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
47	Claudius.	Year of the City, under the Confulships of Claudius and Vitellius.	Ananias made High-Priest, being the 12th after Christ's Birth.
48	7	Claudius finds above fix Millions of Roman Citizens. Messalina publickly marries Cili-	were flain in a Sedicion.
40	8	us in October, and is executed not long after.	dye this Year, aged 68. The Church diffurb'd by Judai zing Christians.
49	8	Claudius marries his Niece A- grippina. Seneca recall'd from Banishment,	Paul and Barnabas go to Jerusa lem. The FIRST COUNCIL in the Christian Church.
72	9		Paul and Barna as return to An
50	9	Young Nero adopted by Claudius. Agrippina obtains the Title of Augusta.	
51	10	Nero made Prince of the Youth.	Paul traveis into Europe. At Philipi he is feo rg'd an imprison'd with Silas.
	11	defeated and brought to Rome.	He goes on to Thessalonica an
52	11	Disturbances in Palestine, which causes the Banishment of Cu-manus, a little before the Pas-	Paul goes to Athens, and did putes before the Areopagus. The Jews banish d by Claudius. Paul goes to Corimb, and stay 18 Months.
	12	Claudius represents a famous Naval Combat.	He writes his first Epistle to the Thessalonians. The Death of the Apostle Phili
53.	12	Nero marries Octavia, Daughter of Claudius.	Paul brought before Gallio.
	13		He writes his second Epistle the The salonians.
	13	Claudius poison'd by Agrippina, on October 13th.	lem, to Antioch, through G.
	14	NERO reigns 13 Years, 7 Months, and 27 Days.	latia and Phrygia, and return to Ephesius, where he remain
54	VI.	Seneca and Burrhus, Governors of the young Emperor.	Apollos preaches at Corinth.
	Nero.	Nero's Government applauded.	Peter goes to Babylon, from when he writes his Epuille. Cerinthus supposed to begin Heresie.
55	1 2	Nero poisons Britannicus in Febru- ary. Vologeses King of Parthia gives Hostages to Nero.	Falix made Governor of Juda: and proves very corrupt an
56	2	Nero begins to degenerate.	The fews deluded by an Ægy, tian Magician. Paul's Miracles at Ephesus. The Sons of Segue defeated
57	3	Nero begins to hate his Mother	The Sons of Scava defeated. Paul at Ephesus writes his first 1 pisse to the Corinthians, and his Episse to the Galatians.

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. D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
57	Nero.		Paul endanger'd by a Tumult. He leaves Ephefus, and makes Timothy Bishop of the Place. He goes into Macedonia, and writes his fecond Epistle to the Corinthians. He goes to Corinth, and writes his Epistle to the Romans.
58	4	Nero takes Poppaa to Court. Corbalo becomes Master of Armenia.	Paul leaves Corinth, and at Troas raises Eutychus from the Dead.
	5	Trial and the second	He is fent to Falix, who keeps him two Years. Ananias depos'd, and Ishmael made High-Priest.
59	5	Nero, after several secret Contrivances, orders his Mother to be slain, March 19th.	
60	6 7	Nero establishes new Games in Rome for five Years.	Festus the 11th Governor of Judaa. Paul is accus'd before him, who appeals to Nero. He is senttoward Italy in September. He is Shipwreck'd, and cast upon Melita. The Death of St. Masthew.
19	7 8	The Britains, after they had kill'd 80000 Romans, are defeated by Suetonius.	Paul arrives at Rome in February
62	8	Nero fends Albinus to be the 12th Governor of Judaa. Burrhus dies, Seneca retires. Nero kills his Wife Ostavia.	Joseph and Anianus made High
63	9	gufta.	St. Luke writes his Acts of the A posties. Paul writes his Epistle to the H
64	10	Nero fets Rome on Fire, July 19th which continues 7 or 8 Days. Rome and Italy afflicted.	h, Paul makes Titus Bishop of Creand goes into Judaa. St. Peter settles at Rome.

A. D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclefiastical Affairs.
64	Nero. 10	Nero Builds a stately Palace, He sends Florus to be the 13th vernor of Judea.	He defeats Simon Magus. THE FIRST GENERAL PERSECUTION beginning in the Month July. The Death of St. Andrew. Paul travels in Afia. The Temple finith'd. Matthias the last High-Priest.
65	11 '	Piso's Conspiracy discover'd April 12th. Seneca, Lucan, and many others suffer. Nero kills his Wife Poppaa.	The Jews afflicted by Florus. Wonderful Presages of their Ruin. St. Paul at Philippi writes his first Epistle to Timothy, and also his Epistle to Titus.
66	12	ceives his Crown from Nero. The Temple of James that in April, and open'd in May, or foon after. Nero goes into Achaia, in the Eng	Ananias slain, August 15th. The Jews horribly massacred a
67	13	from 65 to this Year. Nero contends in the Games, re	dSt. Paul's fecond Arrival at Rome He and St. Peter are imprison'dSt. Peter writes his fecond EpiffleSt. Paul writes his fecond Epiffle to TimothyVespasian carries on the Jewis War, takes Josephus, and clear Galilee in December.
68	VII. Galba.	The first Revolutions in the Empire begin in March. Nero abandon'd, and slain near Rome June 9th. GALBA reigns 7 Months an 7 Days. He governs imprudently.	Linus succeeds them in the See. It St. Clement writes his Epistle toth Corinthians, under Galba.
69	VIII. Otho. I IX. Vitellius. X. Vespasian	VESPASIAN proclaim's July 1st, from which Time h	Josephus set Free by Vespasian. The Jews languist under all th Miseries of War, Factions, De vastations, and Murthers. Ananus and Zacharias are slain. Ignatius succeeds Euvodius in th Bishoprick of Antioch.

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A.D	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclefiastical Affairs.
70	Vespasian.	in Gaul. Domition goes against the Gauls. The Capitol, which was burnt last	He gains the first Wall April 28th, and the second May 7th. He surrounds the City in June. Antonia taken July 5th. The perpetual Sacrifice ceases 7u.
71	3′	the Jews, in the End of April.	Titus weeps over the Ruins of Je- rusalem. The Lands of Judan fold, and the Mony due to the Temple paid
72		Judaa, April 25th. Antiochus King of Comagena de-	The Jews 1 emple in £gypt de- molish'd, and the Race of Da- vid fought for. The christians return to Jerusalem, Barnabas writes his Epistle. The Death of St. Jude. The Death of St. Bartholomew.
73	4	Several Provinces reduc'd to the Roman Power. The Philosophers banish'd.	The Death of St. Thomas in the East-Indies. Josephus finishes his Wars of the Jews.
74	5	Vespasian and Titus make the last publick Census in Rome.	The Death of St. Luke. The Death of St. Simon.
75	6	Peace.	The Jewish Sanhedrim lit at Jab- neh.
76	8	Great Earthquakes in Cyprus and the East.	
77	8	Pliny dedicates his natural History to Titus. A great Plague in Rome.	V 1868/16 20 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1
78	10	Agricola sent to reduce Britain.	Peregrinus the Cynick Philosopher imposes upon the Christians.
79	10 XI. Tirus.	Vespasian dies near Rease, on Jun 24th. TITUS reigns 2 Years, 2 Months and 20 Days. A vast Irruption of Vesuvius, in November, which suffocates Pliny.	Linus Bishop of Rome luffers, and is succeeded by Cletus or Anen- cletus.
80	1 2		Josephus's Wars of the Jews put into the publick Library.

A.D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
81	Titus. 2 3 KH. Domitian.	DOMITIAN reigns 15 Years,	Polycarp made Bishop of Smyrna, this or the next Year. St. John founds Churches in A-fia.
82	1	Domitian makes many Regulations. Agricola proceeds in his Victories.	in Peras.
83	3	Demitian banishes the Philoso- phers. He goes into Germany, and returns with the Title of Germanicus.	Virgins severely punish'd.
84	3	Agricola reduces all Britain to the Roman Power.	San
85	4 5	Domitian affumes Divine Honours, and the Titles of Lord and God	Many Sacrifices offer'd to Dom
86	5	Domitian finishes the Capitol, and institutes Capitoline Games, to be celebrated every 5th Year.	
87	6 7	119 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	The Herelie of the Nicolaitans : bout this Time.
88	7	The Revolt and Defeat of Anto- nius. The Grand SECULAR GAMES celebrated by Domitian, Sep- tember 13th.	
89	8	Domitian banishes the Philoso- phers a second Time.	14.
90	9	25 J. 27	Domitian begins to flew his His tred to the Christians.
91	10	Domitian triumphs over the Da- cians. He shuts the Temple of Janus.	Virgins, bury d alive for Incompliancy.
92	11		Cletus is Martyt'd, and Clemens to mains sole Bishop of Rome.
93	12	Agricola dies, and Domitian's Cru- elties encrease.	Hormas writes his Pastor. Horod's Family quite extinct.
94	13	Quintilian publishes his Rhetorick, Domitian banishes the Philoso- phers a third Time.	Josephus finishes his Antiquities of the Jews, and dies. Apollonius Tyanaus performs his Magick before Domitian.
95	14	Domitian rages against many of his Subjects.	Beginning of the Year. St. John thrown into a Cauldron of boiling Oil, and then ba
1.12	15		nish'd to the Isle of Patmos, Clemens the Consul suffers.

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A. D.	Emperors.	Roman Affairs	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
96	Domitian. 15 16	Domitian slain in his Palace on September 18th. His Memory abolish'd.	St. John writes his Revelations. Several are martyr'd, and St. Jude's Grand-children are que- ftion'd.
	XIII. Nerva.	NERVA reigns 1 Year, 4 Months, and 8 Days. He rescinds the Acts of Domitian.	
97	energani Legal to es the est	The Pratorian Guards raise a Di- flurbance. Nerva adopts Trajan, October 28th, and after that gives him full Power.	Timothy martyr'd at Ephesus, Jan. 22d or 24th. St. John returns to Ephesus, and takes Care of the Church. He writes his three Epissles. At the Request of the Asian Churches, he writes his Gospel.
	XIV.	Nerva dies at Rome on the 21st, or 27th of January.	
98	Trajan.	TRAJAN reigns 19 Years, 6 Months, and 15 Days,	
99	1 2	Trajan made Pontifex Maximus, and obtains the Title of Optimus. He exterminates the Delators, and makes many Regulations.	St. Fohn still careful of the Church.
100	2	Pliny Junior makes his celebrated Panegyrick upon Trajan. Justus of Tiberias finishes his Chro- nicle this Year.	St. Clement Suffers towards the End
	3	192 100 10 100	The End of the APOSTO
101	3	Trajan's first Conquests in Dacia. He Triumphs.	The Herefies of the Cainites.
102	4	Trajan makes many Regulations in the State.	ent city of total
103	5	Pliny Junior made Governor of Pontus and Bithynia. He arrives there September 17th.	Justin Martyr born this Year.
104	6	Nero's golden Palace burnt down. Trajan begins his fecond War in Dacia, and builds a famous Bridge.	Pliny writes in Favour of the Chri- fians. Trajan answers him. The Persecution abated.
105	7	Decebalus slain, and Dacia reduc'd to a Roman Province by Trajan. He triumphs, and orders new Feasts.	
106	8		Papias Bishop of Hierapolis, the tirst Author of the Millenarians.
107	9	The state of the s	St. Ignatius condemn'd to the wild Beafts by Trajan. Simeon Bishop of Jerusalem cruci- fy'd at the Age of 120.

A. D.	Roman Emperors	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
107	Trajan.	No. 1 Paris 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	St. Ignatius writes his 7 Epistles. He is martyr'd at Rome, Decem- ber 20th.
108	10	Trajan makes new Conquests in Parthia and Mesopotamia.	St. Polycarp writes his Epittle to the Philippians.
109	11	Three Cities swallow'd up in Galatia.	Barsimaus in Edessa and Onesimus martyr'd.
110	12	The Pantheon in Rome burnt by Lightning.	Saturninus begins to broach his Heresie in Syria.
111	13	and the second	
112	14		Basilides broaches his Heresie in Alexandria and Ægypt.
113	15	Trajan dedicates a Place in Rome for publishing his Acts.	
114	16	Trajan begins a fecond Expedition into the East.	Elxai the Impostor appears in Pa- lestine, and gives Name to the Ossenian Sect.
115	17	Syria.	Trajan eases the Coristians at the Instance of Tiberianus. The Jews rebel, and use strange Barbarities.
116	18	Trajan pursues his Victories to- wards the Indies. He begins to decline.	The Jews, after innumerable Cnu- elties, are severely chastis d and branded.
	19	Trajan disappointed in Arabia. Trajan dies in Cilicia, on August 8th.	
117	XV. Adrian.	ADRIAN reigns 20 Years, 11 Months wanting one Day. He abandons feveral Provinces in the Eaft.	
118	1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	Trajan Triumphs after his Death. Adrian remits many Debts.	The Church of Athens being much declin'd, is restor'd by Qua- dratus Bishop of the Place.
119	2	Adrian makes an Expedition a- gainst the North, and returns.	Oenomaus the Cynick writes against the Heathen Oracles.
120	3 4	Adrian begins his general Visita- tion of the Empire, and goes in- to Gaul and Germany.	100 m 1 m 100 m
121	4		The Alexandrians disturb d about their God Apis.
122	5	Adrian returns to Rome in April, He gives a King to the Germans.	Loan Atlan

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A.D	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
123	Adrian 6	Adrian begins his Eaftern Vifira- tion, and goes into Asia and Syria.	
124	7 8	Adrian continues still at Greece and Athens.	Adrian enter'd into the Elossimas Mysteries, which creates new Troublesto the Christians.
125	8	Adrian is still at Athens.	A fevere Perfecution against the Christians, under which great Numbers suffer.
126	9	Adrian returns to Rome.	Quadratus and Aristides present Apologies for the Christians. Granian the Governor writes in Favour of them. Adrian eases them by a Decree.
127	10	Adrian makes many Regulations in Rome.	
128	11	pact of the second	ACCUMANTAL TO THE STATE OF THE
129	12	Adrian proceeds in his Visitation and goes into Africk.	Adrian abolities the Cuftom of human Sacrifices.
130	13	Adrian travels into Greece, Asia and Syria.	The Carpocration Herefie begins. A Collection made of those Book call'd Sibylline Oracles.
131	14	Adrian goes into Judaa and Arabia. The Perpetual Edit compos'd by Salvius Julianus.	(1) /
132	15	Adrian goes into Agypt, where he deines Antinous.	Adrian rebuilds Ferusalem, an calls it Elia Capuolina.
133	16	Adrian continues in Agyps.	Justin Martyr converted in Pale stine,
134	17	Adrian leaves Ægypt, and paffes over to Athens.	The fews make a general Revolt under their falle Messiab Bar- cocob. Forusalem taken and demolish'd.
135	18	Adrian returns to Rome, May 3d, and concludes his Vilitation of the Empire. He adopts L. Commodus.	The Mifery of the J.ws at the Siege of Bether, which was taken in August.
136	19	Advian executes feveral confiderable Men.	The Jews are entirely defeated with the Death of soo and eighty thousand of them. The LAST DISPERSION of the Jews. The End of the Bishops of the Circumcision.
137	20	Adrian grows Tyrannical.	The Jews forbidden to see Jerusus lem. Adrian rebuilds Jerusalem, and prophanes it. Mark the first Bishop of Jerusalem of the Uncircumcition.

A.D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
137	Adrian.		Aquila translates the Rible into
138	XVI. Ant. Pius.	2 cth.	The Christians enjoy great Tranquility: Yet Telesphorus Bithop of Rome fuffers.
HINDY C	Am. Time.	ANTONINUS PIUS reigns 22 Years,7 Months, and 26 Days.	
139	1 2	Antoninus gives a King to the Quadi, and another tot e Armenians.	Justin Martyr fettles at Rome, and keeps a School for the Benefit of the Gospel.
140	3	Phlegon Trallianus finishes his O- lympiads this Year.	
141	3 4	Faustina the Empress dies, between the 25th of Feb, and 10th of July.	and the second
142	4	New Games inftituted in Honour of Adrian the Emperor.	Marcion, being excommunicated joins with Cardo at Rome.
143	5		The Heresie of the Valentinians begins in Cyprus.
144	.6 7	Z Contract to	The Herefie of the Marcionites be gins in Rome, and spreads thre many Countries.
145	7 8	Amoninus gives the virile Robe to	i a tanaha tana Manga pana
146	8		Several spurious Writings pub lish'd about this Time.
147	9	Appion writes his Roman Hiftory. THE GRAND SECULAR GAMES celebrated in Rome.	STATE OF THE STATE
148	10	Antoninus folemnizes his first De-	
149	11		The Christians begin to be hardly treated,
150	12	2 3 4 4 5 5 7 5 5 1 5 1 5 1 5 1 5 1 5 1 5 1 5 1	Justin Martyr publishes his first Apology to the Emperor.
151	13	Contraction	Antoninus writes to the Grecians in Favour of the Christians,
152	PA	Scroll Street Street	Antoninus publishes an Edict inFa
153	10	De militarios	The Herefie of the Ophites and Sethians.

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A.D.	Roman Emperers.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
154	Ant. Pins.	21494	Justin Martyr leaves Rome, and Visits the East.
155	. 17 18		Justin Martyr writes against Try-
156	18		A
157	19 20		The Quartodeciman Controversie about Easter, begins. St. Polycarp goes to Rome, where he confounds Marcion.
158	20	Antonius folemnizes his fecond Decennalia.	Hegesippus settles at Rome, about this Year.
159	21 22	Antoninus renews several Laws a- gainst Adulterers.	Melito made Bishop of Sardis in
160	22	The first second in the second	Valentinus dies this Year. Marcellina a Carpocratian Woman comes to Rome.
161	XVII. Ant. Phil.	Antoninus Pius dies at Lorium, on the 7th Day of March. ANTONINUS PHILO-SOPHUS reigns 19 Years and 10 Days. Lucius Verus join'd with him. The Emperor Commodus born, August 31st.	
162	akini k	Many Troubles and Calamities in the Empire.	THE FOURTH PERSE CUTION begins in the first Year of this Reign. Glycerie suffers in Thrace, May 13th.
163	2 3		The Christian Apologies forbidden to be read.
164	3 .		Felicitas and her feven Sons mar- tyr'd in Rome. Concordus martyr'd at Spoleto.
165	. 4	Battels and great Succeiles, finish the War in the East.	himself at the Olympick Games
166	5	the Marcomanni, &c.	Feb. 23d. Fustin Martyr writes his second Atology for the Christians.
167	7		futin Martyr, with fix others, be headed at Rome, by Rusticus the Governor.
168	7	The German Wars begin.	Dionyfius, Bishop of Corinth, flou- rishes at this Time.

A.D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
168	Ant. Phil.		Soter Bishop of Rome sends Alms to Corinth.
169	8	German War.	Tatian at Rome writes against the Gentiles. Symmachus translates the Bible into Greek.
170	9	Antoninus in Person successfully pursues the Wars in the North.	Melito presents an Apology for the Christians. The Heresie of the Antitastes.
171	10	Divers Events in the Wars with the Northern Nations. Antoninus folemnizes his Decen- nalia.	Tatian begins the Herefie of the Encratites in Mesopotamia. The Herefie of Montanists begin in Phrygia. The Herefie of the Adamites and Mogi begin this Year.
172	I 1 12	Antoninus makes many wife Regu- lations. Commodus has the Title of Germa- nicus given him, October 15th.	Pinytus, Philippus, and Modestus Ecclesiastical Writers, flourish a-
173	12	Pausanias pursues his History of Greece,	Bardaser broaches his Heresie in Mesopotamia.
174	13	Antoninus successfully carries on the Wars in the North against the Quadi.	Antoninus and his Men reduc'd to Despair, are deliver'd by the Prayers of the Christians, fo which he writes in Favour of them.
175	14	Antoninus makes Peace in the North. Cassius revolts in April, he is slain in July. Antoninus goes into the East, where he buries Faustina.	The Christians eas'd.
176	15	Antoninus paffes through Syria and Agypt, and comes to Athens. He returns to Rome, and makes his Son Commodus Augustus, November 27th. He triumphs with him, December 23d.	Apollinary, Bishop of Hierapolis writes an Apology for the Christians, and dies shortly after.
177	16	Antoninus remits many Debts to the Publick. Smyrna ruin'd by an Earthquake.	The Persecution reviv'd. Athenagoras and Miltiades present Apologies for the Christians. The Martyrs at Lions suffer in Angust.
20 /	17	personal the an Alban	The Account of them is fent to fe veral Churches. Irenaus made Bishop of Lions.
178	17	Antoninus marties his Son Commodus, and goes with him to the Northern War, August 5th.	Pope Eleutherus for Preachers Hermogenes, the Author of incre ated Matter, appears about this
179	18	Antoninus meets with various For-	Time. Pantanus made Governor of the great catechetical School in Alexandria, which he much improves.

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A.D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
179	Ant. Phil.	Celfus and other Philosophers flourish about this Time.	Many Martyrs this Year.
180	19 20 XVIII.	Antoninus Philosophus dies at Sir- mium, on the 17th of March. COMMODUS reigns 12 Years, 9 Months, and 14 Days.	The Christians eas'd from Persecution under Commodus. Apelles, a Disciple of Marcion broaches his Heresie.
	Commodus. 1	He makes Peace, and returns to Rome in Triumph, Octob. 22d.	•
81	1 2	The Temple of Serapis at Alexan- dria buint.	The Montanists condemn'd by a Council in Asia. Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, writes against the Pagans, and dies. Hegesppus dies at Rome.
82	3	The Romans obtain fome Victories over the Dacians.	
83	3 4	A Conspiracy against Commodus, for which many are executed. Crispina banish'd and slain.	
184	5	Commedus grows tyrannical.	Marcia, the Emperor's Concu- bine, favours the Christians.
185	6	ACC VIII. TO STAND SERVICES	Origen born this Year. The Herefie of the Marcofians. Theodorion translates the Bible int Greek.
186	6	Perennis forms ambitious Defigns, and is min'd,	Apollonius a Senator Suffers Ma tyrdom in Rome.
187	7 8	Maternus confpires against Com- modus, and is executed.	Irenaus writes against all the Herticks.
188	8	The Emperor Caracalla born, A-pril 4th.	Pantanus takes a Journey to the Indies for the Propagation of Christianity. He is succeeded in his School by Clemens Alexandrinus.
189	9	A Famine in Rome, upon which account Cleander and his Sons and flain.	Clemens Alexandrinus writes h Exhortation to the Gentiles. Ammonius Saccas flourishes.
190	10	Commodus grows insupportable. Many Calamities in Rome.	Seleucus and Hermias, two Herefarchs, shew themselves in Galatia.
191	11	The Temple of Peace, and man other Edifices burnt down in Rome.	Rhodon, Disciple to Tatian, flour rishes about this Time,
192	12	Commodus, having made himsel odious, is slain at Rome, December 30th.	* 10 A. Sonak
193	XIX, Pertinax.	PERTINAX reigns 12 Weeks 3 Days. He is skain, March 28th.	Theodotus the Tanner of Byzan tium, with his Disciple Arte mon, broach their Hereses a Rome.

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A.D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
	XX. Julianus.	JULIAN reigns 9 Weeks, 2 Days. He is slain, June 2d.	6 3 7 3 7 3 6 1 3 7 3 7 3 7 3 7 3 7 3 7 3 7 3 7 3 7 3
193	XXI. Severus.	SEVERUS reigns 17 Years, 8 Months, and 3 Days. He marches against Niger in the East.	Contract 15
194	1 2	Severus is successful against Niger, and others in the East.	Clemens Alexandriums writes his Stromata.
195	3	Severus is successful against the Parthians, and becomes Master of the East.	1
196	3	Severus marches against Albinus in the West. Caracalla made Casar.	The Controversie about keeping of Easter begins under Pope Victor, and occasions Synods in several Parts of the World.
197	4	Albinus defeated and flain, Feb. 19th Severus returns to Rome, and dei- fies Commodus, June 2d. Severus marches against the Ea-	Rome, without the Order of the Emperor.
198	5	ftern Potentates. Caracalla made Augustus, and Partner with his Father, June 2d. Severus makes great Conquests in	Narcissus Bishop of Jerusalem flou- rishes at this Time.
199	6	Severus continues in the East. Geta made Casar by the Senate, March 7th.	Narcissus being falily accused, re tires from the See of Jerusa lem.
200	7	Severus still continues in the East.	The Perfecution reaches Africk. Tertullian writes his Apology, with other Pieces relating to the Perfecution, as also his Prescriptions against the Hereticks. The Docetes and Patripassians ap
-	-	-	pear at this Time.
201	8	Severus in Syria gives the virile Robe to Caracalla.	Tertullian discovers the Errors of Praxeas, and causes him to se cant.
202	9	Severas visits Arabia, Palestine and Egypt. He gives a Senate to the City of Alexandria.	fews and Christians, which re
	10	the second second	Irenaus martyr'd at Lions, with al most all the Christians.
203	10	cennalia. Caracalla marnes Plamian's Daugh-	Origen is made Governor of the catechetick School in Alexan
204	II o	Plantian flain about Jan. 22d.	He emalculates himself. Tertullian writes De Spettaculis.

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A.D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs,	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
204	Severus.	THE GRAND SECULAR. GAMES celebrated after June 2d.	Musanus writes against the Encra- tites. Plutarch, Marcella, and Potamia- na martyr din Alexandria.
205	12	Bulla Falix a Robber pillages Italy.	Perpetua, Felicitas, and their Com- panions, fuffer at Carthage, March 7th. God punishes Africk with Barren- nels. Tertullian inclines to the Monta- nists.
206	13	Severus makes many Regulations in the State. He is severe to the Senators.	
207	14	Bulla Falix suppress'd.	Tertullian, now Montanist, writes against the Marcionites and other Hereticks.
208	15 16	Severus joins his Son Geta with him, and makes him Augu-flus. He goes with his two Sons into Britain.	
209	16	Severus meets with many Difficul- ties and Successes in Britain.	Philostratus the Athenian writes the Life of Apollonius Tyanaus.
210	17	Severns builds a Wall in Britain. He falls fick, towards the End of the Year.	Minutius Falix writes for the Chri- fian Religion. Tertullian writes De Pallio.
# (3.67)	XXII.	Severus dies at Eboracum or Tork, on the 4th Day of February.	The fifth Perfecution ceases.
211	Garacalla.	CARACALLA reigns fix Years, 2 Months, and 4 Days. Geta join'd with him.	Origen-goes to Rome. Apollonius writes against Montanus.
212	Garran b	calla, Feb. 17th.	origen takes Affistants in his cate- chetical School. Alexander Bishop of Cappadocia, by divine Impulse, join'd with Nar- cissus Bishop of Jerusalem.
213	7	many Changes, and returns to	The Montanists are excommunicated by the Church of Rome, to- gether with Tertullian. Tertullian writes feveral Pieces against the Orthodox.
214	3	cies.	re Origen composes his Tetrapla. He goes to preach in Arabia, and returns to Alexandria.
215	4	Caracalla travels into Macedoni and Asia, where he commit new Follies.	is to
216	2 5 1 2 5 1	ble Barbarities at Alexandria:	and preaches at Cafarea. He is recall d by his Bishop Deme

A. D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclefiastical Affairs.
in of	Caracalla,	Caracalla flain by Martial in Syria, April 8th.	The fourth Greek Version of the Bible found at Jericho. Natalis, a Confessor at Rome, lap
17	XXIII. Macrinus.	MACRINUS reigns 1 Year, 2 Months wanting 3 Days. He purchases Peace of the Parthians, and winters at Antioch.	fes, and is reftor d. The Herefie of the Melchifedeci- ans.
.18	ı · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Elagabalus declar'd Emperor May 16th. Macrinus and his Son flain, on the 7th Day of June.	for Origen into Syria, to be in-
	Elagabalus. I	ELAGABALUS reigns 3 Years, 9 Months, and 4 Days. He winters at Nicodemia.	
219	1 2 1	Elagabalus comes to Rome, where he begins to commit many Extravagancies.	LOOK LOOK TO A
220	2	ing a weath of the second	Great Instances of Superstition a mong the Romans.
221	3	Elagabalus adopts his Cousin A- lexianus, and calls him Alexan- der.	Julius Africanus composes hi Christian Chronology.
222	4 Elagabalus si Rome, on March.	March.	peror Alexander. Hippolytus, Bishop in Arabia, flo
	Alexander.	ALEXANDER reigns 13 Years and 9 Days. He makes great Regulations.	
223	I 2	Alexander proceeds in his Regula- tions. His Grand-mother Masa dies.	Origen writes Commentaries upo the Scriptures, and employs for veral Notaries.
224	3	Dion Cassius, the Historian, advanced.	ed syn sind III
225	3 4	The Emperor Gordian born, Janu ary 20th.	Carlotte Hivax
226	4 5		
227	5		Origen applies himfelf to Philosophy, and writes to Heraelas Justification.
228	6	Upian, the great Civilian, flain i	At Palestine he is ordained Presb ter, which is highly referred
229	7	Dion Cassius retires to Bithynia, an finishes his Roman History.	his Bishop Demetrius.
230	8	The second secon	
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1. D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
231	Alexande	Antipoli el contentación de Rengalelent Rel len cellent Rel len cellent antipolita Relation de la contentación de Rengalent	Origen oblig'd to quit Alexandria, and is condemn'd by two Councils, and excommunicated. He finds many Protectors. The Council of Iconium, about Heretical Baptilm.
232	10	Alexander marches against Artax erxes, who had wasted Mesopota mia.	
233	eat if of	Alexander has great Successes a gainst Artaxerxes, and the Per fians.	
234	12	Alexander returns to Rome, and triumphs, September 25th. He marches against the Germans foon after.	in the second state of the second
235	XXVI. Maximin.	MAXIMINU S reigns 3 Years, and a few Days.	Beginning of Maximinus's Reign. Tertullian writes De Corona, and a-
236	Alchen	Several confpire against him. Musimin successfully wars against the Dacians and Sarmarians, and winters at Sirmium.	gainst Flight in Persecution. Prototectus and Ambrosius impri- for'd for the Faith. Origen writes to them concerning Martyrdom, and retires from Calarea.
-100 P	1 on 1 on 1	Gordian and his Son proclaim'd Emperors in the middle of May. They are flain in July. Maximus and Balbinus declared by the Senate, July 18th. A great Sedition in Rome, and part of the City burnt.	Origen proceeds in his Commen taries upon the Bible. The Church enjoys Peace.
	XXVII. Maxim. & Balbinus.	Maximin belieges Aquileia. He is flain before the Place in the End of March.	Origen re-affumes his School in Cafarea. Gregory Thanmaturgus flourishes about this time.
238	XXVIII. Gordian.	MAXIMUS and BALBINUS reign a little above 3 Months. They are flain, July 15th.	
	Gorana.	GORDIAN reigns 5 Years, and 8 or 9 Months.	
239	1 0 1	Gordian governs with great Satif- faction.	Gregory Thaumaturgus miracu- loully ordain'd Bithop of Neo- Casarea. He is said to work many Miracles.
240	3	Sabinianus sets up for Emperor in Africk. He is soon suppress'd.	
241	3	Gordian marries the Daughter of Missineus. Earthquakes and Prodigies in the Empire.	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
242	4 5	Gordian is successful against the Goths, and against Sapores King of Persia.	

A.D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
243	Gordian.	Mifuheus dies. Philip advanc'd to his Place. Gordian declines.	100 A
244	6 XXIX. Philip.	fia, in the Month of March.	Philip fuppos'd (not without Rea- fon) to be a Christian. He fubmits to Penance under Ba- bylas Bishop of Antioch. Origen writes to him, and his Em- press.
245	10 1 1 10 1 10 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	Philip returns to Rome, where he makes many Regulations.	The Church flourithes, and Pope Fabian fends many Bishops and Pastors into Gaul. Tertullian turns Heresiarch, and dies soon after.
246		Philip's Son has the Tribunitian Power.	St. Cyprian converted to Christia- nity at Carthage. He fells his Estate, and gives it to the Poor. Origen still industrious.
247	3 4	Philip's Son made Augustus.	Origen combates against several Hereticks in Arabia. St. Cyprian made a Presbyter in Carthage.
248	4 5	THE GRAND SECULAR GAMES celebrated the last Time in Rome, U. C. 1000. Philip undertakes to purge the City	
249	5 6 XXX. Decius.	Famines and Troubles in the Empire. Decius proclaim'd Emperor. Philip is flain between June 17th and October 19th. DECTUS reigns two Years, and a Month or two. He makes his four Sons Cafars.	The Christians barbarously treated at Alexandria, in the Month of January. THE SEVENTH GENERAL PERSECUTION, in the Begin
259	SO HAVE		Pope Fabian martyr'd Jan. 20th. Abdon, Vistoria, &c. martyr'd, Co. levinus and Moyles imprison'd. The Perfecution reaches Africk is
251	3	and marches into Massia. Valerian nam'd Censor, October 27th Decius deseated by the Goths, an	The Beginning of the Novation Schifm.

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A.D.	Roman Emperers.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
251	XXXI. Gallus.	GALLUS reigns one Year, and 6. Months. Gallus makes Hostilian Augustus, and his Son Volusian Casar. He makes a dishonourable Peace with the Goths.	Rome.
252 901 h		Volusian made Augustus in the End of July. Gallus comes to Rome and causes Hostilian to be slain. Many Nations invade the Empire.	The first Council of Antioch. The second Council of Carthage. Gallus revives the seventh Persecu-
253	XXXII. Valerian.	£milian proclaim'd Emperor. Gallus and his Son slain at Terni in May.	The third Council of Carthage. St. Cyprian writes against Fortuna-
10101		VALERIAN reigns almost seven Years, Æmilian slain in August. Gallienus made Augustus.	tianus of Assur.
254	grad 1 350 36 V	Valerian governs well and honourably.	Pupienus opposes St. Cyprian. The fourth Council of Carthage, concerning Basilides and Mar- tial. St. Cyprian writes about Alms. He is concern'd with the Gallican
255	3	en'i impire di selata yana ilangan ila	Bishop. The fifth Council of Carthage, concerning the Validity of Hereticks Baptism.
256	3 3 3 3 4 3 5 5 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6	The second of th	The fixth Council of Carthage up- on the fame Subject. Pope Stephen rejects all their Pro- ceedings. St. Opprian writes to Julianus. The feventh Council of Carthage in September. Firmilian, Dionysius, &c. join with St. Opprian.
25,7	4	The Perfians, Scythians, and other Nations invade the Empire.	THE EIGHTH GENERAL
258	5	Valerian marches with his Army to Byzantium, to go against the Perfians.	

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. D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
	Valerian.	The Scythians pass the Danube, enter Asia, and pillage an infinite Number of Places.	Many Martyrs suffer in Africk, Spain, Lybia, Palestine, and other Parts of the Empire.
	7	Valerian declines. Valerian is taken Prisoner by Sapo- res King of Persia.	to relax the Persecution in Octo-
60	XXXIII. Gallienus.	GALLIENUS reigns almost 8 Years after his Father's Captivity. Vaft Ravages made in the Empire.	shop of Antioch.
ne)	1	Posthumus sets up in Gaul, Ingenu- us in Pannonia, who is slain, and succeeded by Regillianus.	a seri della
61	1	the East. Great Troubles in Alexandria before the Passover.	The Christians behave themselves nobly at Alexandria. Dionysius Alexandrinus ingages against Sabellius. This occasions the second Council of Rome.
	2	They are both flain. Odenathus is fuccessful against the Persians.	The state of the s
ecole const	e romy (Artist eg - 2 our many (Artist	Aureolus, who fets up himfelf; and reigns till Gallienus's Death. Gallienus triumphs for Odenathus's Advantage over the Persians.	Marinus martyr'd at Cafarea. Aftyrius celebrated. Gallienus publishes a Rescript in
62	3	The Goths and Scythians ravage Greece and Asia, and pillage Diana's Temple. Æmilian sets up in Ægypt.	Favour of the Christians, after the Death of Macrianus. Dionysius Alexandrinus consutes. Nepos and the Millenaries. Many Christians carry'd captive by the barbarous Nations.
263	3	Saturninus sets up in the Borders of Scythia. Æmilian besieg'd in Alexandria and afterwards slain. Regillianus slain in Pannonia, af	The Christians fuffer much in the
	4	ter three Years Reign. Odenathus defeats Balifta and the Perfians.	
264	4	er in the East, is made Augustus, and join'd with Gallienus. Gallienus marches against Posthus.	Which occasion the second Council of Antioch.
	5	musinGaul, where he is wounded. Victorinus joins with Posthumus, and out-reigns him.	
265	5	flain. The Isauri revolt.	s Gregory Thaumaturgus dies at Ne Casarea, after he had govern'd that Church 26 Years.
3370	6	Celsus sets up in Africk, and reigns but seven Days.	
266	6		Faith amongst them.
266	7	and Cappadocia, and carry away	the Goths, who propa

A.D.	Roman Emperers		Ecclesiastical Affairs.
267	Gallienus, 7	, Odenathus after four Years Reign is flain by Maonius. Zenobia and her Sons succeed him in the East. Posthumus in Gami slain by Lollianus, who sets up himself. Victorius and Marius slain. Tetricus succeeds in all Gant. Vast Ravages in the Empire.	
- 49	8 XXXIV.	The Goths and Hernli pillage Afia and Greece. Gallienns flain near Milan on the 20th Day of March.	
258	Claudius. 1	CLAUDIUS reigns a little above two Years. He defeats Aureoins, and returns to Rome in Triumph.	Claudius is suppos'd to be somewhat severe to the Christians.
269	2	The Goths to the Number of \$20000 Men, after many Ravages, are defeated by Claudius. Zabias General to Zenobia becomes Master of Agypt.	Porphyry, the Apostate Christian, flourishes in this Reign.
	3.	Claudius marches to Sirmium in Pannonia, where he dies in the Month of April.	The Christians are favour'd by A relian. The Third Council of Antio which deprives Paulus Samoj tanus, and places Domnus
270	XXXV. Aurelian.	AURELIAN reigns five Years wanting one Month. Smintillus Emperor for 17 Days. Aurelian thews Vigour and Severity.	his See. St. Anthony retires to the Defarts of Ægypt, at 20 Years of Age.
271	2	The Marcomanni, and other Nath- ons, defeated by Aurelian. Aurelian returns to Rome, and en- larges the City Walls.	The Sybits Books fearch'd into. The Christians slighted.
272	3	Amelian begins his March against Zenobia. He defeats Zenobia, and besieges her in the latter End of the Year.	Interest.
273	3	Zenobia is taken Prisoner. Longinus is executed by Aurelian. Aurelian punishes Palmyra. He reduces Firmus in Ægypt, and causes Tetricus in Gans to yield.	Paulus Samosatanus deprived by Aurelian. Aurelian casts an evil Eye upon the Christians.
274	4	He triumphs over all. Constantine the Great born Feb. 27th. Aurelian builds a Temple to the Sun. He abandons Dacia.	PERSECUTION begins
2.75	. 2	Aurelian flain near Byzantium, in the Month of March.	

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A.D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
275	XXXVI. Tacitus.	An Interregium of fix Months. TACITUS begins his Reign, Sep- tember 25th, and continues 6 or 7 Months.	
276	ı XXXVII.	Tacins goes towards the East. He is slain at Tarsus in Asia on the 12th of April, or a little after.	The Christians enjoy a full Peace. Anatolius Bishop of Laodicea flourishes in the Beginning of Probus's Reign.
2/0	Probus.	PROBUS reigns 6 Years, and 3 or 4 Months. Florian flain, after three or four Months Reign.	
277	1 2	Probus obtains vast Victories in Gaul. Great Rejoycings at Rome.	The Herefic of the Manichees be gins about this Time.
278	2	Probus marches into Illyricum and Thrace, and clears them from the Goths and Sarmatians.	
279	3	Probus conquers the Isauri, and the Blemii, and makes Peace with Vararanes King of Persia. He returns through Thrace, and triumphs.	
280	4	Saturninus revolts in Ægypt, and Proculus and Bonofius in Ganl. Probus reduces them all.	
281	5	Probus gives Peace to the Empire, and employs his Soldiers in Planting, Building, &c.	Derotheus, a worthy Presbyter of Antioch, flourishes about the Time.
282	6 XXXVIII.	Probus flain near Greece, in August or November.	ciples of Origen, flourish in
202	Garus, &c.	CARUS reigns about one Year and one Month. He makes his Son Carinus and Nu- merian Cafars.	
283	83	Carus worsts the Sarmatians. Carinus and Numerian made Augusti in the latter End of August. Carus after Advantages over the	
	2	Persians is slain by Thunder after the 8th of December.	
284	XXXIX.	Carinus makes magnificent Feafts in Rome, September 12th. Numerian flain by Aper, before the 17th of September.	
284	Diocletian.	DIOCLETIAN reigns 20 Years, 7 Months, and 14 Days. Maximian made Casar, November 20th.	or the Ara of the Marty

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A. D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclefiastical Affairs.
285	Diocletian. I	Carinus overthrown by Dioclesian, and flain in Masia. Maximian marches against the Bagauda in Gaul.	have been martyr'd this or the
	2 1	en france (F) a final esta denomb	
286	3	Maximian made Augustus, and equal with Diocletian, April 1st. He has the Western, and Diocletian the Eastern Parts of the Empire. Caransins revolts in Britain.	The Christians meet with some Troubles at Rome,
287	acoltic of the control of the contro	Diveletian is successful against Nar- fes King of Persia. Maximian worsts the Germans.	Several are suppos'd to be mar- tyr'd this Year. The Emperors publish Edicts a- gainst the Manichees.
about	Rodonkoli.	Maximian is victorious over the	The Herefie of the Hierarity of
288	5	Germans.	bout this Year.
289	5	Maximian is forc'd to make Peace with Caransius. Diocletian wars with the Sarmatians.	2012 / 2 1 2014 / 2 1 21 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 1
290	6	Caransius obtains the Title of Augustus in Britain. Achilleus sets up in Ægypt.	Methodius and Villorinus, two wor thy Bishops, flourish about thi Time.
291	7	Great Troubles in the Empire. The two Emperors confult at Mi- lan.	XXXXIII or Never tiday
292	• 8	Constantius and Galorius made Ca- fars at Nicomedia, March 1st. The Empire divided among the Emperors and Casars.	Assessed Assess
293	9	Carausius slain in Britain by Alle Hus, who holds the Island thre Years longer.	a military
294	10	Galerius obtains Advantages ove the Sarmatians, and other Nor thern Nations,	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,
295	11	The Carpi submit to the Romans	Phileas and Hesichius, two worthy Bishops, and Pamphilus and Lu- cian, two eminent Presbyters flourish about this Time.

4. D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
296	Diocletian.	Allestus in Britain reduc'd by Constantius. Diocletian reduces Achilleus in Ægypt in 8 Months.	
	13	C. L. in Grand Gallington F. A.	PRINCIPLE OF THE PRINCI
297	13	Galerius is successful in the East. He grows insolent.	The Later and Control
	14		
298	14	Diocletian's and Maximian's Baths begun this Year.	Diocletian begins to perfecute the Christian Soldiers. Arnobius writes against the Gentiles.
	15	and the second second second	
299	. 15	The Marcomanni are defeated by the Emperors.	237
	16	Cherry ada, value and an a	
300	16		Peter of Alexandria flourishes.
	17 ′		43
301	17	Constantins defeats the Lingones, and kills 60000.	The Christians begin to grow cor- rupt. The Schism of the Meletians be-
,	18		gins this Year.
302	18	Empire.	Galerius urges Diocletian to per- fecute the Christians. Diocletian consults the Oracle, and consents,
	19		241.50
303	19	Diocletian celebrates his Vicennalia at Rome, and triumphs November 20th with Maximian. He leaves Rome in hafte.	February 23d. at Nicodemia, continues 10 Years, and four Months.
08.00 1961 1961	20	esterito	Horrid Cruelties and innumera- ble Martyrs in all Parts of the Empire, Ganl only excepted.
304	20	Diocletian has a great Sickness most of this Year. He arrives very ill at Nicomedia in the End of the Year. He is believ'd to be dead on the	Pope Marcellinus lufters on Octo-
	21	13th of December.	A Vacancy in the See of above three Years.

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A.D.	Roman Emperors.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclefiastical Affairs.
305	Diocletian 21 XL.	Diocletian appears openly, March 1st. He refigns the Empire, with Maximian, on May the 1st. CONSTANTIUS reigns one Year, one Month, and 25 Days. The Empire independently divided between him and Galerius. Maximin and Severus are Casars.	Maximin follows his Example. The Perfecution ceases in Africk and the West.
inus O	1	Constantius sends for his Son Con- stantine into Britain. Constantius dies at York, on the 25th Day of July.	the Perfecution in their Dominions. Peter, Bishop of Alexandria, writes
306	XLI. Constantine	CONSTANTINE reigns 30 Years, and almost 11 Months. Severus made Augustus by Gale-	his Canonical Epiftle before Ea- fier. Constantine favours the Christians. The Meletian Schism encreases. The Schism of the Donatists begins.
307	2	Severus goes against Maxentius, and is stain in April. Alexander sets up in Africk. Maximian gives his Daughter Fau- sta to Constantine in May. Galorius goes against Maxentius, and returns in a Fright. Galerius makes Licinius Augustus in November.	He and Enfebius vindicate Origen's Works.
308	2 3	Maximin affumes the Title of Augustus, and Galerius unwillingly confirms it both to him and Confiantine. Maximian conspires against Constantine, and is defeated.	Years, Marcellus is made Bi- thop of Rome, Feb. 18th. Valentina Thea, and many others
309	3 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	A great Sedition in Rome, which is much afflicted by the Tyrannies of Maxentins.	Pamphilus suffers Feb. 16th. Eusebius retires to Ægypt, where he is imprison'd. Marcellus Bishop of Rome condemn'd to keep Beasts, and then banish'd, October 7th.
310	4 5	Maximian, for his treacherous De figns against Constantine, is executed. Galerius struck with an incurable Difease in March.	

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A. D.	Roman Emperers.	Roman Affairs.	Ecclesiastical Affairs.
	Constantine	Galerius oppress'd with Torments, dies miserably in May. Maximin enlarges his Dominions	your of the Christians, Apri
311	5	in Asia, Alexander defeated in Africk, Constantine begins his great Expedition against Maxentius, and enters Italy in the latter End of	
	6	the Year.	10th. Peter, Bishop of Alexandria, suffers, Navember 15th.
•	6	Constantine intirely defeats Max- entius, and enters Rome in Tri- umph, in Offober. THE INDICTION begins. Dioclesian afflicted.	of the Crois in the Heavens. He advifes with Bishops and peru fes the Scriptures. He publishes his first Law in Fa
12	He dies miserably, December 3d.	Vour of the Christians. Maximin unwillingly complie with it.	
313	7	Constantine marries his Sister Con- stantia to Licinius in Jan. Maximin marches against Lici- nuis.	feveral Laws for Christianity a Milan. Licinius against Maximin is instru
	8	He is overthrown by Licinius in May, and flies to the East. Maximin in great Diffress poi- fons himself, and dies misera- bly in August.	tred by an Angel. The tenth Perfecution ended in tirely, June 13th.

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